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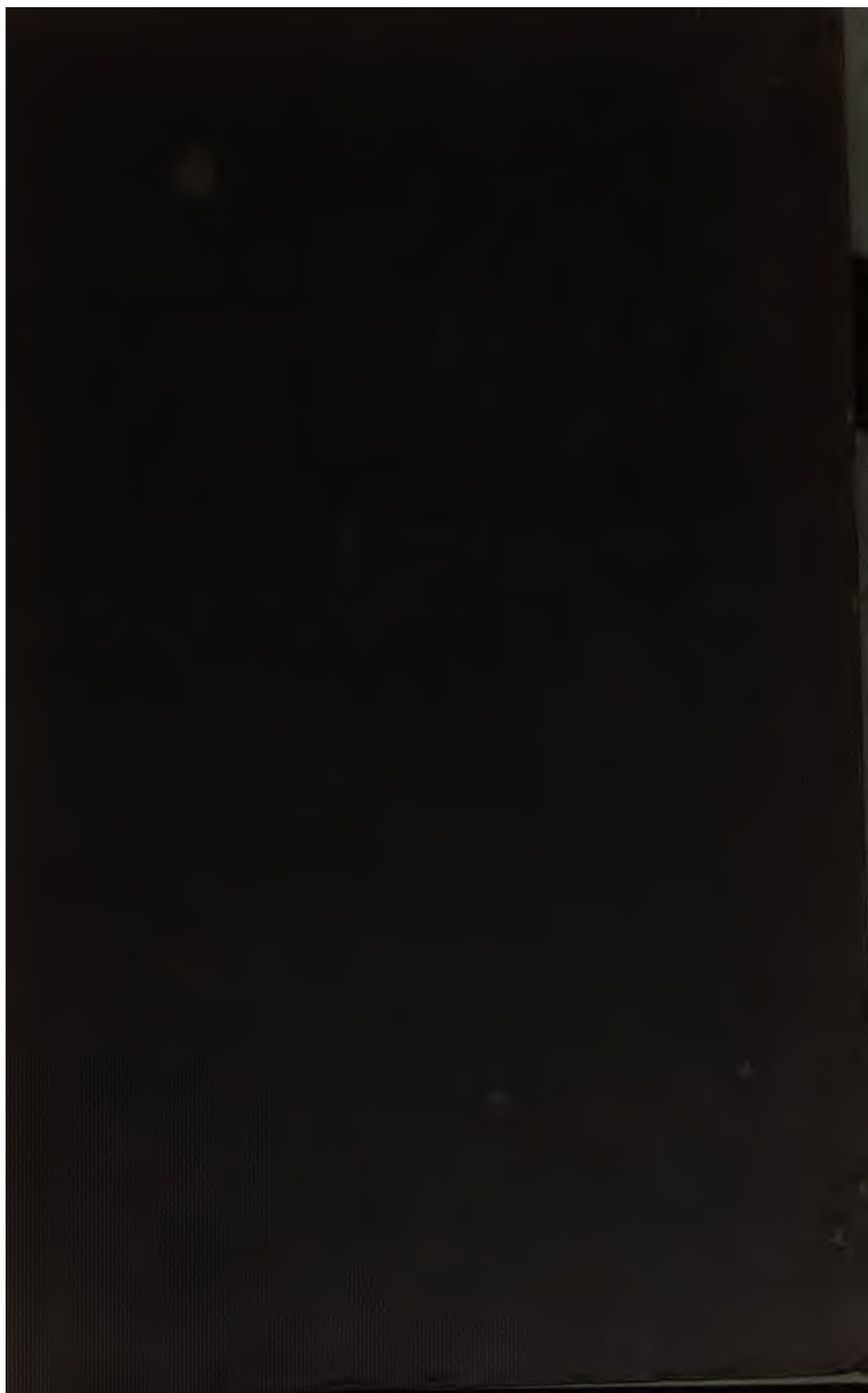
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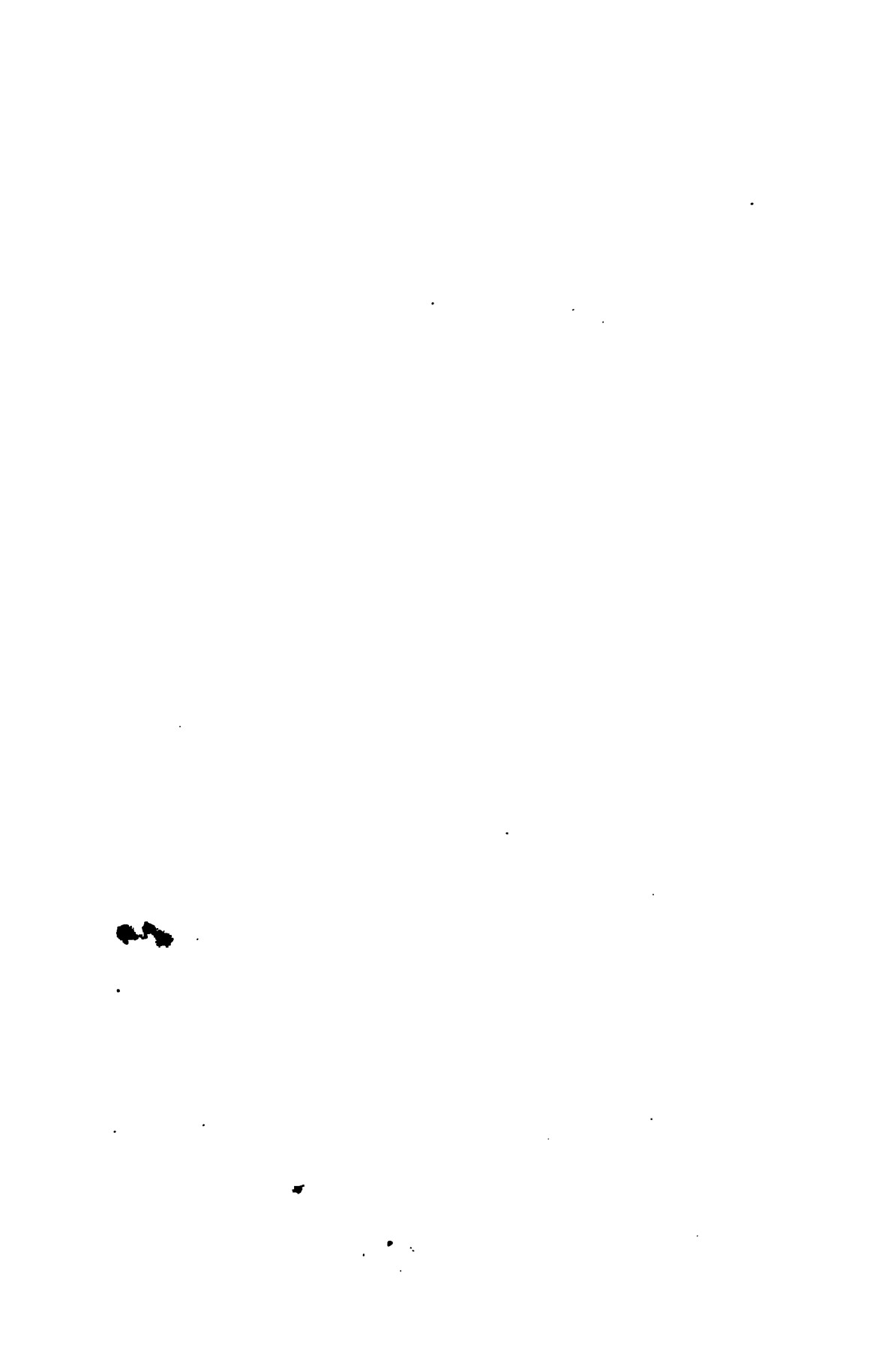


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THE
DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT

DEDUCED FROM SCRIPTURE,
AND
VINDICATED FROM MISREPRESENTATIONS AND OBJECTIONS.

SIX DISCOURSES,

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN,

Being the Donnellan Lectures

FOR THE YEAR 1857.

BY

JOHN COTTER MACDONNELL, B.D.

• Ex Sch. T. C. D.

VICAR OF LARACOR, DIOCESE OF MEATH.

Δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν.

MATT. xx. 28.

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TO

THE REV. WILLIAM C. MAGEE, B.D.

MINISTER OF THE OCTAGON CHAPEL, BATH,

THE WORTHY INHERITOR OF A NAME

ILLUSTRIOUS FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF

THE ATONEMENT,

The following Pages are Inscribed,

AS A SLIGHT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OF THE VALUABLE ASSISTANCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT,

GIVEN BY HIM TO THE AUTHOR

IN THEIR PREPARATION,

AND AS A REMEMBRANCE OF MANY HAPPY YEARS OF

UNBROKEN FRIENDSHIP.

PREFACE.

It is now nearly sixty years since Archbishop Magee published his great work on "Atonement and Sacrifice." The controversy which prompted its publication, and which had previously called forth the excellent Bampton Lectures of Mr. Veysie, after smouldering for half a century, has again burst out with renewed violence; and the doctrine of Atonement is now assailed, not by Socinians only, but by members and ministers of our Church. Mr. Frederick D. Maurice, and other writers of note, have taught their followers to regard every thing, which had been generally considered essential to this doctrine, as the idle inventions of a semi-heathenish priestcraft; and Professor Jowett's book on the Epistles of St. Paul has boldly adopted statements and arguments which were before considered peculiar to the Unitarian and the Deist. The publication of his work seemed suddenly

to wake up the University of Oxford to a sense of the perils, from the side of Rationalism, which were gathering round her ancient faith. Among all the strange essays in that remarkable book, the short essay on the Atonement attracted peculiar attention; and sermons, reviews, and pamphlets, in reply to it, issued in numbers from the press.

It will not, I hope, be attributed to any want of respect for the eminent men who have written on this subject, when I express my opinion that their publications were for the most part too fragmentary in their form, and too much devoted to the consideration of specific objections, to furnish more than a temporary safeguard for the truth. Mr. Thompson's elegant and learned Bampton Lectures, though not liable to these strictures, appeared before the controversy had assumed its present form, and are in many ways unsuited to meet the evil as it now exists. Mr. Litton's more recent work only dealt with the subject of Atonement as viewed through the medium of the Old Testament—a view which, however important, is only subsidiary to the main question at issue. But whatever may be thought of the merits of these works, the University of Magee has done nothing at the present crisis for the vindication of a truth, of which, when assailed by Socinians, she produced by far the ablest defence.

Under these circumstances, after much hesitation, I proposed to deliver a course of Lectures before the University upon this vital question; and I now offer these Lectures to the public, hoping at least, that if they fail to meet the wants of the day, they may incite some one more competent to attempt a work of so much interest and importance.

Such being the circumstances which induced me to deliver and print the following Lectures, I have a few words to say about their contents. They are not meant to be a complete treatise on the Atonement; nor yet are they intended merely to answer the objections peculiar to the present day. They were written, indeed, with a special reference to these objections, and particularly to the works of Jowett and Maurice; but my object has been rather to restate the doctrine, and the Scriptural evidence on which it rests, in such a form as to exhibit the futility of these attacks, than to review the objections themselves in detail.

The reader will consequently find that some topics have not been touched on, which are generally looked for in a work upon the Atonement. Differences of opinion, which divide those who hold the doctrine of an objective Atonement in all essential points, have been as far as possible left untouched; as the question now at issue is not about such details, but about

the doctrine as a whole—whether it is to be retained as the teaching of the Spirit of Truth, or to be consigned to the same fate as those “fond things, vainly invented, which are grounded on no certain warranty of Scripture, but are rather repugnant to the Word of God.”

This wish to unite the defenders of the doctrine of Atonement against the common danger, will account for some of the omissions in this work. Others, however, have arisen from my unwillingness to enlarge the book beyond what was absolutely necessary. I would gladly have made my view of the Atonement more complete, by adding dissertations on subjects which had not been touched on in the Lectures, if I had felt more certain that what I had already done was likely to meet with acceptance. The dissertations which have been annexed treat of subjects introduced in the Lectures, but with too much brevity to admit of their being satisfactorily treated there.

Some misconceptions which had arisen about my meaning, and also (I am not ashamed to confess) a modification of my own opinions consequent on the discussions to which the delivery of my Lectures gave rise, obliged me to rewrite a portion of Lecture I. (p. 14 to 21); and to alter some expressions, and insert some explanatory paragraphs in Lecture VI.

With these exceptions, the Lectures remain as when they were delivered.

In conclusion, I have to offer my thanks to the many kind friends who aided me in my investigations, and directed my attention to various sources of information which might otherwise have escaped me. To them, and to the Heads of Trinity College who selected me to lecture on so important a subject, and to the Fellows and Professors who encouraged me in the prosecution of my task, I desire to acknowledge my obligations; and, next to the wish that my book may promote the cause of Christian truth, is my anxiety that *they* should have no reason to regret the measure of patronage and encouragement so kindly bestowed upon me.

J. C. M. D.

Laracor Glebe, June 10, 1858.

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"Some have endeavoured to explain the efficacy of what Christ has done and suffered for us beyond what the Scripture has authorized :

"Others, probably because they could not explain it, have been for taking it away, and confining his office as Redeemer of the world to his instruction, example, and government of the Church."—BUTLER'S *Analogy*, Part II. chap. v.

LECTURE I.

THE LEGAL SACRIFICES, AND THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.

HEBREWS ix. 13, 14.

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh : how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?”

THE great doctrine of the Atonement, which is to be the subject of my Lectures, has ever been considered the central truth of Christianity. In our day it has received additional prominence by becoming the battle-field of controversy—the favourite point of assault for those who are seeking to remove the ancient landmarks of the faith. It will be my earnest endeavour, in defending this truth, not only to furnish you with a safeguard against the erroneous opinions which have been recently published in England by members of our Church ; but also to warn you against inaccurate and unscriptural modes of stating the doctrine which have long prevailed among us almost unquestioned. When every careless expression and imperfect defini-

tion is eagerly seized upon as a pretext for discarding the doctrine itself, it is time for us to separate the truth from every addition which may awaken hostility, or furnish a handle for scepticism to take hold of.

It will not, however, be sufficient for my purpose, merely to canvass the objections of opponents, and the misstatements of friends. Such a negative mode of defending truth would neither suit the practical character which ought to belong to addresses from the pulpit, nor furnish more than a partial and temporary safeguard against error. He alone is armed against error, who thoroughly apprehends, and firmly grasps the truth. He who has learned the doctrine of the Atonement from the teaching of Scripture, not from dry, formal definitions, or barren dogmas; and who has embraced it as the one truth, which satisfies the wants of his spiritual nature, and harmonizes the jarring elements of his being; who lives by and for a crucified and risen Saviour; that man will readily brush aside the various perversions that would cloud the truth he loves. He will neither listen to those who obscure its brightness with the rust of philosophical speculation; nor to those who in their anxiety to remove the rust of centuries, destroy the substance of the truth itself. My object, then, will be to draw from Scripture the several positive truths which relate to the sufferings and death of Christ, and their effects on the human race; and to show them in such a light, as will at once exhibit the substance of that faith which is suited

alike to all places and all times, and yet contrast it specially with the erroneous systems which are the peculiar danger of our day. May the Spirit of truth guide us in this inquiry, so that the assaults which have been made on the doctrine of the Atonement may lead us to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good," and cling with more hearty faith "to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

In using the word *ATONEMENT* to denote the doctrine, or rather group of doctrines, which treat of the work of Christ, I have followed the ordinary language of theologians at the present day, though I do not mean to restrict myself to what that word specially indicates. I need scarcely remind you that it is a term the signification of which has been much altered and enlarged. Originally, as its etymology (*at-one-ment*) denotes, it meant simply reconciliation; and it is so used in the only passage of our version of the New Testament in which it occurs, where it is the translation of the Greek word *καταλλαγή*¹. In the ordinary usage of our day it denotes, not the reconciliation, but that which is the ground of reconciliation. Thus, as applied to Christ, it has become almost equivalent to sacrificial expiation, or propitiation, and corresponds rather to *ἱλασμός* and *ἱλαστήριον*, than to any other words in the New Testament.

¹ Rom. v. 11.

But its meaning, if so restricted, would be too narrow for the subjects we have to discuss. Perhaps the best summary of those subjects is to be found in the answer given by the Catechism to the question, "Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?" The reply is, "For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and the benefits which we receive thereby." The truths, then, to which that Sacrament points,—the death of Christ considered as a sacrifice, and the benefits which flow to us from it,—are the subjects we have to consider; whether or not they are properly included under the single word Atonement.

It is impossible to read the New Testament without being struck by the numerous allusions to sacrifice in connexion with Christ's work. The Baptist proclaims Him to be "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world²." St. Paul calls Him "our passover sacrificed for us³." St. Peter speaks of Christians as "redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish⁴." St. John calls Him the "propitiation for our sins⁵." And the same sacrificial language meets us in a variety of passages which I need not now repeat, as they will come before us hereafter in due order.

But before we enter on the particular investigation of their meaning, let me premise that there are two questions which must be kept steadily in view throughout the discussion. The first is the old question of

² John i. 29.

³ 1 Cor. v. 7.

⁴ 1 Pet. i. 19.

⁵ 1 John ii. 2.

the Socinian controversy, as to how far such sacrificial language is to be regarded as figurative and rhetorical; the other, which is peculiar to recent controversy, leads us to observe whether these sacrificial allusions are scattered alike through all the New Testament Scriptures, and whether they assume a similar prominence in all. This question is rendered necessary by a statement of Professor Jowett, who, among other modes of assailing the received doctrine, has not hesitated to say that it has been derived solely from a single book (the Epistle to the Hebrews); and that this Epistle, in its method of stating the relation of the Law and the Gospel, is essentially opposed to the teaching of St. Paul⁶. It seems expedient, therefore, to keep the proofs arising from the several apostolic writings distinct from one another, and to treat them as separate classes of evidence, instead of quoting them indiscriminately. We shall thus be enabled to judge as we proceed, whether there is any real discrepancy between the way the doctrine has been treated in the Epistle to the Hebrews and elsewhere. There is indeed one special difference between this book and the other Scriptures. The Epistle to the Hebrews may be considered as a treatise on sacrifice—as a detailed exposition of the relation between the types of the Law and the realities of the Gospel. Unless, therefore, Scripture is at variance with itself, we ought to apply here the rule of interpretation generally admitted in such cases, and explain the briefer allu-

⁶ See NOTE 1.

sions to be found elsewhere by the fuller statements of this Epistle. This is the usual, as it is certainly the most natural course. Nor should we be deterred from it by the unsupported assertion, that its teaching is at variance with St. Paul's. It will be well, however, to pay so much deference to that opinion, while examining the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as to avoid mixing up our inquiry with any reference to the other apostolic writings. But when we have ascertained its doctrine from the Epistle itself, we may then apply our conclusions to the explanation of the briefer teaching on the same point contained in the other Scriptures. If we find the doctrine thus independently deduced to give an easy and consistent meaning to other passages, this will furnish the strongest proof of which the nature of the case admits, that we have found the true meaning, not of one part of Scripture, but of the whole; and that all the apostolic writings teach the same doctrine, however various the aspects under which they exhibit it⁷.

Our first inquiry, then, is: What is the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews about what Christ has done and suffered for us? The writer professes to teach us the true import of the Mosaic types and sacrifices, and their relation to Christ. What, then, is the substance of his teaching?

Of the general scope of the Epistle it is not requisite to say much. Few will doubt that its main purpose is to prove to men still practising and revering

⁷ See NOTE 2.

the ritual of Moses, the superior dignity of the religion of Christ. The writer begins with setting forth Christ as revealer of the new faith, and shows his pre-eminence over angels, and over Moses. He then considers Him in his priestly character, and asserts the superiority of Him who was a "priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec," over the descendants of Aaron. He touches on various points connected with his priestly office; his appointment by God Himself; his holy character; his sympathy for human infirmity; his endless life, which fitted Him ever to make intercession for us, without transmitting his office to another. And then at the opening of the ninth chapter, he enters on the subject of the meaning and value of the Mosaic rites, and compares them minutely with the corresponding acts of Christ, pointing out the exact value and significance of both type and antitype, with a precision and minuteness not to be found elsewhere. Here, then (in the ninth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews), we have the nearest approach to a complete theory of sacrifice to be found in the sacred volume. Let us master it before we proceed to consider the more passing and fragmentary statements of other writers.

The ninth chapter opens with a very minute description of the tabernacle and its several parts; and this at the ninth verse is followed by a short account of the religious ceremonies to which they were subservient. The writer in passing draws some important conclusions from the structure of the tabernacle, and the separation of the Holy Place from the Holiest

of all. But these inferences, which were intended to convince the Jew of the temporary design of his system of worship, do not so immediately concern us, who are rather inclined to wonder that the Mosaic economy continued so long, than that it was at last superseded. This, which was the principal lesson insisted on by the Apostle, is just the lesson that we least need: but in inculcating it, he makes statements, and uses arguments, which are, if possible, more valuable to us, in the present aspect of religious controversy, than they were to those Hebrews for whom they were primarily designed. The nature of our redemption through Christ Jesus is no where more fully set forth than in its contrast to the ordinances of the Jewish law.

To understand this contrast, let us consider first what is said of the use of the Mosaic rites, and the extent of the efficacy which belonged to them.

And, first, the writer asserts distinctly that they were efficacious for certain purposes. He says in our text ^a that "the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh." Again, at ver. 22, he says, "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." These words undoubtedly assign a cleansing virtue to the blood of the legal sacrifices, and admit their power in some sort to procure remission. Yet it is remarkable how little is said positively as to their

^a Ver. 13.

efficacy, though we have reiterated and precise statements about their deficiency. A careful examination of these chapters will scarcely add any thing to the information contained in my text, which gives this summary of the effects of the legal sacrifices,—that they “sanctify” (and, as is plainly implied, sanctify *only*) “to the purifying of the flesh.”

The “blood of bulls and goats” mentioned here, and again at ch. x. ver. 4 (as well as other allusions), show that the writer had throughout specially before his eyes the sacrifices of the great Day of Atonement, which were a sort of annual climax of the Jewish sacrifices, when the High Priest offered a bullock for his own sins, and a goat for those of the people⁹.

But the “ashes of an heifer” joined with the “blood of bulls and goats” in my text, refer evidently to the ceremonies of purification, mentioned in Numbers xix. We see there what the “purifying of the flesh” properly means. We find several circumstances enumerated (such as touching a dead body), by which a man was considered to have contracted a pollution that unfitted him for joining in the public services of his nation. The ashes of a red heifer, sacrificed and burned in a prescribed form, were “laid up,” that they might be dissolved in water and sprinkled on those who had contracted this kind of uncleanness. Of such importance was this ceremony of purification, that he who neglected it was to be “cut off from the congregation”¹.

⁹ Lev. xvi.

¹ Numb. xix. 20.

Now, no difficulty arises from considering the ashes of a heifer as only sanctifying to the purification of the flesh. The very form in which the precept is recorded in Numbers might lead us to that conclusion, even without an Apostle's comment upon it. The uncleanness was one created by the ceremonial law, and removed by following its directions. The purification could not extend beyond the original uncleanness, and that was only ceremonial; namely, a disqualification for joining in those services which formed for all Israelites their bond of union with one another and with their God. This disqualification was strictly ceremonial (for the accidental touch of a dead body could produce no *moral* impurity); and, therefore, its removal is naturally and rightly designated "the purifying of the flesh." But this description is not limited to sprinkling with the ashes of a heifer: the effect of the "blood of bulls and goats" is included as of the same kind. This is strange enough. Are we to consider the sacrifices of the great Day of Atonement, plainly pointed to in the words "blood of bulls and goats," the very greatest of all Mosaic sacrifices, as merely possessing an efficacy of the same kind, to the "purifying of the flesh," though extending to a wider range of offences? This is the most natural construction to put on the Apostle's words, however strange it may at first sight appear. He distinctly assigns to the highest sacrifices of the law, as well as to its most ordinary ceremonies, an efficacy only to the "purifying of the flesh"—to maintaining or renewing the

visible covenant bond between God and his people. Indeed, this is essential to the whole scope of the reasoning; and is, moreover, repeated elsewhere in other and even stronger language. Thus, he says again, emphatically, "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins²." And, again he says, "Every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which *can never take away sins*³." And he makes his meaning still plainer as to what he considers these sacrifices could or could not do, by the expression he applies to the whole tabernacle service, that it "could not make him that did the service *perfect, as pertaining to the conscience*⁴." In short, his judgment upon Jewish ceremonies and sacrifices amounts to this: that they could, as prescribed by the law, cleanse the congregation and its members from the impurities and disabilities which the law had itself created; and procure for them such remission of their offences, as it was within the scope of the law to give: but that this was after all only a "purification of the flesh;" inasmuch as to sin (properly so called) they could not reach, so as to remove its burden from the "conscience," and cleanse the worshipper "from dead works to serve the living God."

Some may be startled by this very low estimate of the efficacy of the Jewish sacrifices, and feel somewhat incredulous consequently as to whether this is

² Heb. x. 4.

³ Heb. x. 11.

⁴ Heb. ix. 9.

the Apostle's meaning. And, in truth, the more we examine the Epistle to the Hebrews, the more we must feel that the chief difficulty we have to deal with is the very disparaging tone in which the Mosaic sacrifices are spoken of. So far is this Epistle from "*identifying*" the Law with the Gospel, and "*fusing them into one*," that no where in the New Testament do we find such a studied depreciation of the legal sacrifices, and so clear a statement of their imperfection. It may be well, therefore, to pause and consider how these strong assertions are reconcilable with the law of Moses, and with the conceptions of it prevalent amongst ourselves. Let us, then, consider briefly what was the nature of the covenant and atonements ordained through Moses.

The Jewish covenant, it is important to remember, was made with the nation as a whole; and individuals shared in its blessings only as members of the Divine polity. The sanctions of the law, moreover, were such as befitted the worldly existence of a nation. They were purely temporal. Whatever knowledge Israel may have had of a future state, it formed no part of the sanctions of the Mosaic law; which, regarding the individual only as a citizen, did not extend its view to those prospects which awaited him, when death should sever his connexion with the worldly commonwealth. The condition of God's covenanted blessings was obedience—obedience to all that God commanded, whether moral or ceremonial. And this was a hard condition to

^s Jowett, vol. ii. p. 476.

require; for, besides numerous ceremonies, which it must have been irksome, though quite possible, to comply with, the law demanded obedience to moral precepts of the broadest kind; including not only the prohibitions of the decalogue, but the heart-searching precepts, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart ⁶," and "thy neighbour as thyself ⁷."

Such a covenant, if this were all, bore on its face the marks of incompleteness, and want of adaptation to human nature. It made no provision for the frailty of man, and the certainty that none could keep such stringent conditions. And hence, from this very deficiency, St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans infers the necessity of some new mode of regaining the Divine favour, which he calls "a righteousness without the law." But did the law make no provision for human sinfulness; did it not provide sacrifices and atonement for sin in those sacrifices; so that even sinners might still participate in the blessings promised to obedience? This important question, involving, as it does, the principles on which the whole Jewish economy was based, shows the necessity of examining carefully the various opinions which are current in our day about the extent of the forgiveness granted through the Mosaic sacrifices.

According to one theory, the Jewish worshipper received through his sacrifices as full and complete remission of sin as the Christian: but, as it was "impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away

⁶ Deut. vi. 5.

⁷ Lev. xix. 18.

sin," this efficacy was *not inherent* in the Jewish sacrifices, *but derived* from that great sacrifice to which they had reference. Thus, according to this theory, there would be little real difference between the sacrificial pardon of Jew and Christian: both were pardoned for Christ's sake; but the one rested on the antitype itself, while the other looked to it through its type. It is strange what a hold this theory has on many in our day; for it is absolutely destitute of support from Scripture, and is opposed to some of its plainest teaching. No hint of such a *derived* efficacy is to be found in the law of Moses; and the silence of the New Testament amounts to a refutation of it. For, if this were true, how could St. Paul have argued as he has done in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, about the insufficiency of the law? His whole reasoning rests on the supposition, not that the law provided a remission derived from the Gospel, but that it provided none at all. And the passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which we have been considering, teach the same thing. They tell us, *not* that the "blood of bulls and goats" took away sin by a virtue derived from the sacrifice of Christ; but that it was "impossible" that they could take it away, or "make the worshipper perfect as pertaining to conscience"—words which plainly assign a much lower place to the Mosaic sacrifices than the theory which we have been discussing.

This sweeping denial of any efficacy in the legal sacrifices to take away sin, will not, however, seem strange, if we fairly consider the limited scope of the

Jewish polity. The code which regulated penalties and atonements among the Jews was a mere system of external control, exactly parallel to the penal codes of other nations; except so far as it was modified by its recognising no sovereign but God Himself. This theocratic constitution produced an unparalleled blending of civil and religious duties. A *crime* against society was also necessarily a *sin* against God as the supreme Sovereign; and whatever undermined the Divine authority was a crime against the state. Hence idolatry was the high treason of the Jewish law, and was punished by the magistrate with the utmost severity, as it struck at the very root of the theocracy⁸. Social offences were also dealt with as sins, and required in some cases for their forgiveness both reparation to an injured neighbour, and atonement to God. But after making allowance for these peculiarities, the Levitical code was strictly a system of external law, regulating only the outward conduct of citizens to one another, and to their head, and never intruding into that domain of man's inner nature, which is beyond the control of penal statutes, and the scrutiny of a human judge⁹.

The law thus dealing with its citizens had its penalty, or its terms of forgiveness for every overt act of crime. Presumptuous sins it punished with excision from the theocracy. For other crimes it had fixed penalties, and atonements in lieu of excision. To undergo the punishment and to offer the prescribed

⁸ See NOTE 3.

⁹ See APPENDIX to this Lecture.

sacrifice, saved the criminal from being "cut off from the congregation." Thus the sacrifices had a real effect upon the social position of the offerer, whom they maintained in, or restored to his place in the Divine polity. Their further use, whether as prophetic types or symbolic teachers, did not add to their expiatory power. All that the worshipper had a right to expect from his sacrifice was an exemption from all further demands of the law itself. He who had offered the required sacrifice was in the same position as the criminal who in our country receives a verdict of acquittal, and who can never again be indicted for the same offence; even though conscience may tell him that he is still a sinner before God. Nor was the benefit of the sacrifice less real because it was limited in extent, and fell so far short of what conscience required. To use Archbishop Magee's words, "That the remission of sins obtained by the Levitical sacrifices, was a remission only of temporal punishments, cannot weaken the general argument" (*i. e.* that there was a real remission), "as the sanctions of the law under which the sacrifices were offered, were themselves but temporary. The remission of the penalty due to the transgression was still real and substantial: the punishment was averted from the offender, who conformed to the appointed rite; and the sacrificial atonement was consequently in such cases an act of propitiation. The sacrifices of the law, indeed, considered *merely* as the performance of a ceremonial duty, could operate only to the reversal of a *ceremonial* forfeiture, or the remission of a *tem-*

“*poral* punishment: that is, they could propitiate God only in his temporal relation to his chosen people, as their Sovereign¹.”

Mr. Thompson briefly and forcibly states the two-fold aspect of sacrifice. He says, “Every Jewish sacrifice had a real effect, and also a symbolical meaning. *It restored the worshipper to his position as a member of the Divine polity, and so far was effectual*; and it set forth the universal truth that God must be reconciled to the sinner who has offended Him, if he would save his soul alive; but as it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins, and as no sacrifice was prescribed or allowed for heinous wilful transgressions, *this part of the sacrifice was symbolical only*.”

But from the external aspect of the law, under which sacrifices were offered, arises a still further limitation of their efficacy. If we restrict their effects to an external cleansing, it seems unavoidable that we should also narrow the circle of sins to which they were applicable. For if they only applied to the external consequences of overt acts, and left the conscience of the sinner still needing atonement; it seems plain that they were inapplicable to sins of the heart—at least that they could convey no remission for that internal pravity—which is the source of all crime. This communicated no defilement to the flesh, and consequently required no legal purification.

¹ Magee on Atonement, Note 37, pp. 224, 225; vol. ii. edition of 1842.

² Thompson's Bampton Lectures, Lect. III. p. 64. See NOTE 4.

Covetousness, lust, alienation from God, envy, hatred, and malice, were outside the jurisdiction of external law; though when they manifested themselves in their appropriate crimes—fraud, theft, adultery, idolatry, blasphemy, false witness, violence, and murder—they were dealt with as all such overt acts are dealt with in a penal code of external laws. They were either punished, or pardoned by expiation. But *moral depravity as such, when unaccompanied by crime against the theocratic polity was alike beyond the reach of legal punishment, and legal sacrifice.* The law, therefore, while demanding inward purity (and in this it went beyond every other code of national law), had to leave the reward of inward obedience, and the punishment or pardon of inward guilt, to the invisible Lawgiver Himself.

But it is true that we find it hard to conceive God's chosen people thus left by Him under the yoke of such a purely ritual system, and possessing in their sacrifices only the instrument of an external forgiveness. Hence even Archbishop Magee, though admitting that "the Jewish sacrifices, merely as legal observances, operated only to the temporal benefits annexed by the Levitical institution to those expressions of allegiance," immediately qualifies this statement³ by the bold assertion that "*as genuine and sincere acts of worship and penitence, whenever the piety of the offerer rendered them such, they must likewise⁴ have operated to procure that spiritual*

³ See NOTE 5.

⁴ See NOTE 6.

“*remission and acceptance*, which, antecedent to, and “independent of the Levitical ordinances, they are “found in several parts of Scripture to have been “effectual to obtain ⁵.”

But this very able writer seems here to have put his own ideas of what the Jewish sacrifices ought to have been, for what Scripture tells us that they were. It is in vain to endeavour to harmonize such a statement with the words of the Apostle. If the Jewish sacrifices could “*never take away sins* ⁶,” is it consistent to say that they could, and actually did take them away under certain conditions? If St. Paul puts it forward as the peculiar and novel excellence of Christianity “that through this man (Christ) is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins*: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses ⁷,” how can it be maintained that the penitent offerer, under the law, received through his sacrifices “*spiritual remission and acceptance*?” There must be something unsound in a theory which requires us to reconcile statements so widely at variance.

But, in truth, the exaggerated ideas prevalent about the efficacy of the Mosaic sacrifices arise from a total misconception of their place in the religion of the Israelite. Prohibitions of crime, ceremonies, penalties, and sacrifices formed the external machinery of the Mosaic code, but not the whole of the Jewish religion. Besides these things, the Divine govern-

⁵ Magee on Atonement, Note 37, p. 225.

⁶ Heb. x. 11.

⁷ Acts xiii. 38, 39.

ment of Israel included spiritual precepts and super-human sanctions, and controlled man in things which belong not to the domain of external law by an agency transcending any possible earthly executive. The reward of spiritual obedience, the punishment or pardon of inward depravity, belonged to that invisible government by which the great Lawgiver dealt with his people in their inner life; and however these dealings might be symbolized in the tangible ordinances of an external law, they were independent of it, and outside its jurisdiction. That the devout Jew (like every true worshipper of Jehovah since the creation) was not a mere formal ritualist is most true: but, if we want to see the inner aspect of his religious life, it is not in his sacrifices we can study it, any more than in his "meats and drinks, and divers washings".^a Because the Atonement of the cross is the centre of our faith and hope, we must not therefore suppose that the typical sacrifices occupied an equally high position in the religion of the Jewish saint. To fancy such a one, when labouring under the burden of sin, and longing for pardon and reconciliation with God, to have sought this through the instrumentality of legal sacrifices, however piously and devoutly offered, is a fiction of our own imagination. It is a picture which does not correspond to the reality exhibited in the Psalms and the Prophets. Penitence and spiritual obedience, there so strongly insisted on, are not taught as the necessary dispositions

^a Heb. ix. 10.

to make sacrifice effectual, but exalted to the disparagement of sacrifice⁹. The Prophets and the Psalmists evidently viewed their sacrifices as having nothing to do with inward guilt, or penitence, but as belonging to the province of *external public law*. On no other supposition can we read the disparaging terms in which they speak of sacrifice, without feeling that their language tends to throw contempt on a Divine institution. To sacrifice they would have been ready to give its due honour among the external ordinances of a divinely appointed ritual; but when the wants of the inner man are their theme, they cast it aside as useless. Its perfection as a symbol cannot, in their estimation, give it any part in the procuring of "spiritual remission and acceptance." They give no countenance to any attempt to raise sacrifice above the typical ceremonies with which the Apostle classes it in our text. We must therefore conclude that it is not casually, but designedly, that "the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean" are here placed on the same level of efficacy with "the blood of bulls and goats" shed in the solemn sacrifices of the great day of expiation.

Having thus examined the first part of the contrast which the text presented for our consideration,—the legal sacrifices which "sanctified to the purifying of the flesh;"—let us now turn to the more important part of our subject, and consider the picture here given of Christ's work, and the points of resemblance and contrast between type and antitype.

⁹ See Lecture II.

We need not waste time in proving that Christ is in this Epistle continually spoken of as the *priest* and *high priest* of Christianity, in whose person the Levitical priesthood was at once fulfilled and annulled. Nor, again, need we prove that what Christ did for us is spoken of always as a *sacrifice* or *offering*, the fulfilling of all previous sacrifices: and that, in accordance with sacrificial language, his *blood* is spoken of as the instrument whereby He procured for us so many and so precious blessings. These points lie on the surface, and are interwoven with the language of the whole Epistle, so that the most careless must find them there, and the most sceptical criticism cannot refine them away.

But as the existence of these expressions is undeniable, the question is raised whether they are not used *rhetorically*¹, in order to give to Christ's sufferings a value in the eyes of a Jew, by thus pointing out, in highly figurative language, their resemblance in some points to his national sacrifices. Are they then used thus figuratively on account of a mere superficial resemblance? or are they used because of a deep and real analogy between the things compared in their most essential attributes?

Whatever colour there may be for maintaining that the sacrificial language in which Christ's death is elsewhere spoken of is resolvable into mere Jewish rhetoric, there is none here: for we are not merely left to infer from Christ's death being called a sacri-

¹ See NOTE 7.

fice (as when St. Paul styles Him "our passover") in what respects it was or was not properly so called; but we are told, with the utmost precision possible, wherein it agreed, and wherein it differed from its legal types.

Throughout there is presupposed that external resemblance, which some would have us believe to be the entire correspondence traceable between type and antitype—the violent death, the shedding of blood, the suffering of the innocent victim through the sinfulness of men. But if this were all that made Christ's death a sacrifice, the term might with equal propriety have been applied to Stephen, or any other illustrious martyr in the cause of truth. In such a loose and rhetorical sense, as some would apply to sacrificial language, we might speak of Stephen as *sacrificed for the good of mankind*, as *shedding his blood for sinners*, as *dying the just for the unjust*, and so forth. But no amount of perverse interpretation can thus explain away the ninth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as the writer not only speaks thus of Christ, but states precisely why he does so; and tells us exactly in what that offering, "made once for all," exceeded every actual or conceivable martyrdom among men.

First, then, he uses a variety of expressions stating the object as well as the fact of Christ's sacrifice: such as that He "has appeared to *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*:" "He was once offered to

¹ Heb. ix. 26.

bear the sins of many³:" "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified⁴:" and further on he describes the Gospel covenant (that covenant which he had spoken of as ratified by the blood of Christ) in the words of Jeremiah, as one in virtue of which "*sins and iniquities*" were to be "*remembered no more⁵."* And he argues from this that Christ's offering needed not repetition, as "*where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin⁶."*

Remission of sins, then, is the great boon won for us by the blood of Christ, and which gives to his offering the name of sacrifice. His death is the crowning instance of the great principle of the law, that "without shedding of blood is no remission⁷." The difference lay in the offerings; in the one case the "blood of bulls and goats," in the other the "blood of Christ:" and in the proportionally different extent of the remission procured. Under the law, we have seen, that remission extended only to the removal of ceremonial impurity and legal penalties—a mere "purifying of the flesh:" under the Gospel it reached to the sins and iniquities of the heart; and, as if to remove all ambiguity on this point, Christ's offering is expressly contrasted with those legal ordinances "that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience⁸." It is asserted that it can "purge the conscience:" "How

³ Heb. ix. 28.⁴ Heb. x. 14.⁵ Heb. x. 17.⁶ Heb. x. 18.⁷ Heb. ix. 23.⁸ Heb. ix. 9.

much more shall the blood of Christ . . . *purge your conscience* from dead works, to serve the living God?"

Remission of sins, then, extending to the purification of the conscience, to the removal of all inward uncleanness, so as to "perfect for ever" the "sanctified" believer, and to fit him for the "service of the living God," is the effect here distinctly ascribed to the offering of Christ. It is asserted to flow from it as directly, as the corresponding but lesser blessings from the Mosaic sacrifices. This is what is meant by saying that Christ's death was an expiatory or piacular sacrifice. An expiation or propitiation (ἱλασμός) is that *which procures remission of sins*; and this expiatory virtue is here as distinctly ascribed to Christ's blood, Christ's offering, Christ's death, as something similar, though inferior, is attributed to the legal sacrifices. Both were expiatory, both procured remission; but the extent of the expiation—of the remission procured—varied with the widely different objects and scope of the dispensations to which they belonged: the one remitting the consequences of transgressing ceremonial ordinances, or contracting legal defilement, and restoring to the outward advantages of citizenship in Israel; the other cancelling all the consequences of spiritual corruption, and removing the burden of guilt from the conscience, and restoring the sinner to membership in the true Israel, to a citizenship in heaven; giving him access into the true Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus, with no veil to intercept his communion with the

Father. Such, in its broadest outline, is the Atonement described by the Apostle; such is the Atonement which the Church Catholic has ever believed. We have a High Priest who offered his own body and shed his own blood for the remission of our sins; *not merely* that He might leave behind Him (as, indeed, He did) an *example* of unparalleled virtue, and an *assurance* of our immortality; but that He might *thereby* “redeem us from the curse of the law⁹,” from the threats of an accusing conscience, and the denunciations of a righteous God. He died not only to proclaim peace between man and God, but to procure it—“to make atonement (ἱλάσκεσθαι¹) for the sins of the people;” and so “he became” not only the teacher, but “the *author* of eternal salvation (αἰτιος σωτηρίας) to all that obey him².” May God “give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.” Amen.

⁹ Gal. iii. 13.

¹ Heb. ii. 17.

² Heb. v. 9.

APPENDIX TO LECTURE I.

DISSERTATION ON THE EFFICACY OF THE MOSAIC SACRIFICES.

THE extent of the efficacy which belonged by Divine institution to the Mosaic sacrifices, has been a topic of much controversy of late; and as it is a point of the utmost importance in determining the true relation between the Law and the Gospel, it will be well to fill up the cursory sketch given in Lecture I., and exhibit more fully the evidence on which the views there stated mainly rest.

All theories agree in admitting the inefficiency of the legal sacrifices to procure any remission for the class of sins called "*presumptuous*;" as these were always punished capitally, and thus cut off the offender irrevocably from the Divine polity and covenant. Of this kind were murder, adultery, idolatry, and other flagrant transgressions. But it would seem that minor transgressions were also said to be done "*presumptuously*," or *with an high hand*¹, when they were done in such a way as to show contempt of the law, and open rebellion against the Lawgiver. Outram says, "Verumenimvero locutio illa, quâ quis in Deum *elata manu* peccare dicitur, certum nullum indicat peccati genus, sed certam peccandi rationem; qualis est eorum, qui jussa Dei aspernantur, legibusque ejus contemptum afferunt *quovis in peccati genere*."² Thus after the menace "the soul that doeth ought

¹ Numb. xv. 30. The former is the text of E. V., the latter the marginal rendering following the Hebrew.

² Outram De sacrificiis, lib. i. cap. xii. p. 126. See also on this subject the valuable remarks and quotations from Jewish authorities in cap. xiii. § 6.

presumptuously . . . the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath despised the word of the Lord³;" the instance of the man who was stoned for gathering sticks on the Sabbath is given as an example: and this would seem to be an instance of an offence—Sabbath-breaking—not usually punished capitally; but which in this case was so visited, as having been done in open defiance of the Divine law.

But, after deducting from the catalogue of crime the sins called presumptuous, which were altogether excluded from atonement; there are two points to be determined about other transgressions. 1. Was the expiation by sacrifice merely an external purification, which only restored the offender to theocratical privileges; or did it confer spiritual remission and forgiveness? 2. Was sacrificial expiation applicable to the whole range of sins not presumptuous; or did it extend only to some of them?

From combining the different answers which may be given to both these questions, four distinct theories arise, besides many lesser shades of opinion. Against that theory which represents the Mosaic sacrifices to have been instrumental in procuring true spiritual remission, I have protested (Lecture I.) as opposed to Scripture; and for the same reason I have objected to Archbishop Magee's modification of it⁴, which while admitting that the instituted and promised effect of the Mosaic sacrifices was only external and theocratical, yet claims for them a higher (though it would seem uncovenanted⁵) efficacy, in the case of the devout and penitent worshipper.

But, after rejecting the spiritual efficacy of Jewish sacrifice, there still remains the further question, whether the promise of even a limited expiation was applicable to all sins not presumptuous. On this point I at first adopted the statement of Mr. Davison, who maintains that "the law (in its directions about atonement) takes up the ritual, and passes almost untouched the moral transgression⁶." To this debility of the law, however, as regards moral delinquency, he allows that there were several exceptions—exceptions, indeed, so important that they are generally regarded as invalidating his rule. That Mr. Davison laid

³ Numb. xv. 30, 31.

⁴ See NOTE 8.

⁵ See NOTE 9.

⁶ Davison on Primitive Sacrifice, p. 74.

down a defective rule, I have little doubt; and consequently his whole statement has been successfully attacked by various opponents. Thus, it has been urged⁷ that most of the offences called ceremonial, implied some degree of moral guilt in the offender. So, also, sins of ignorance were culpable, unless the ignorance was unavoidable. But, moreover, it has been argued that *sins of ignorance and inadvertence* (for all which sin and trespass offerings were prescribed⁸) are not limited to such offences as these words seem to imply, but *include all sins not presumptuous*; that is, not done "from a deliberate and audacious defiance of the Divine authority"—"*all which flowed from the infirmities and passions of human nature*." If this be so¹ (and it is confirmed by strong Scriptural authority), the assertion that the Mosaic atonements were not applicable to moral transgression, except in a few special instances, is totally untenable. But even if sins of ignorance are regarded as including a much narrower range, a rule which requires us still to admit so many exceptions as Mr. Davison himself enumerates, can scarcely be called a rule.

But having admitted the failure of Mr. Davison's theory, and the force of his opponents' objections, we have yet to consider whether on the whole his statement, or theirs, is nearer to the truth. That he laid down a wrong rule to distinguish offences which were expiable from others, does not prove that all, without exception, were expiable, but that more were so than he admits, and therefore that he drew the line of division in the wrong place. I have sought to prove (Lecture I.) that the admission of the external theocratic character of the Jewish atonements, necessarily made them inapplicable to some of the most important sins. And these sins so far follow Mr. Davison's classification, that they were sins against moral rectitude. The class of sins thus counted incapable of atonement is, however, far less extensive than he supposed, as it includes no overt acts of moral transgression. The truth would seem to be that moral depravity, *as such*, was, under the law, as incapable of expiation as of punishment; but that, on the other hand, when a social crime was committed, it was not excluded from atonement, because (as Mr. Davison's statement would imply) it had its origin in immorality of heart.

⁷ Magee, Note 37, p. 216; and Fairbairn's Typology, vol. ii. ch. iii. § 7.

⁸ Lev. iv. 2; v. 15.

⁹ Magee, Note 37, p. 222.

¹ See NOTE 10.

Moreover, it would seem that in allotting punishment, or demanding atonement, the law was not guided principally by the shades of moral guilt, but by the injury done to the external framework of society. Thus, adultery with a freewoman, who had been betrothed, was punished with death²; while the same offence, in the case of a bondmaid, was admitted to atonement³. Here, surely, it is the social injury done by the crime (varying as it would in these two cases, in a state where slavery was permitted) which regulates the treatment of the offender; though judged by the spirit of the moral law, or even by the letter of the decalogue, the guilt was equal in the two cases.

Another instance of the same kind may be found in the diversity of victims prescribed for sin-offerings, according as the sin had been committed by the high "priest," by a "ruler," or "by one of the common people⁴." I do not allude to the substitution of a less costly offering by the poor⁵, which was plainly regulated by a regard to the means of the worshipper ("pro facultatibus offerentis," as Outram says⁶); but to a diversity in the victims, which had regard, not to the wealth of the offender, but to his position in the visible theocracy. Shall we say with Mr. Fairbairn, that this "gradation in value was intended to mark the "more or less offensive character of the sin to be atoned;" and that "there was thus perpetually brought out, in connexion with "the means of atonement, the solemn truth, that while all sin is so "offensive in the sight of heaven as to deserve the penalty of death, "it grows in offensiveness with the rank and number of the transgressors'?" May we not find a more natural solution of this arrangement in the fact, that an offence implying the same moral guilt in two different persons, might yet inflict a very different amount of injury upon the Divine polity; and that the sacrificial system, having regard to sin chiefly in its bearing on the visible theocracy, marked this difference by a diversity of victims? This is the more remarkable, if we remember that sin-offerings are by many considered to have atoned for sin *as sin*; while the trespass-offering "was a dealing with sin, . . . not in its higher and pri-

² Deut. xxii. 23, 24.

³ Lev. xix. 20—22.

⁴ Lev. iv. 3. 22. 27.

⁵ Lev. v. 7.

⁶ Outram, lib. i. cap. xii. § 5.

⁷ Fairbairn's Typology, vol. ii. chap. iii. § 7. The word "*offensive*" here used is peculiarly ambiguous.

“ many relations, but in such only as were subordinate and earthly, “ and admitted of a sort of reparation ¹.” If, then, *even the sin-offerings* were apportioned rather to the theocratical injury inflicted by the offence, than to the criminality it manifested, it is impossible to suppose that sins were *in any case* dealt with under the Mosaic economy simply with a view to the moral depravity from which they sprang.

Other instances might be added, but this will perhaps be sufficient to indicate that Mosaic atonements, as well as punishments, were not regulated solely by a regard to the degrees of moral depravity, but to the exigencies of the state; which, though founded on moral and religious principles (more so, indeed, than any other polity), yet dealt with sin only as it bore on the good of society, and did not attempt to measure it merely by the sinfulness of the offender, estimated according to a perfect standard of morality. This, perhaps, few will dispute in the case of punishments ². The important point in our present argument is, that it is true also of atonements, which are apportioned, not as might be expected with atonements conveying spiritual remission, but as atonements which formed part of the external machinery of an earthly visible government.

Atonement, then, under the law, saved the offender from a temporal penalty which would otherwise have been inflicted on his misdeeds, and maintained him in his position as a Jewish citizen. And here it may be well to notice an inaccuracy of Archbishop Magee on this point, which might give rise to serious misapprehension. He says, that “ atonements involved a real and literal remission of the offence,—*that is, of the penalty annexed to it* ¹.” But it is more correct to say, as Mr. Litton remarks ², that “ the civil penalty was first suffered, and then expiation by sacrifice was permitted.” In many cases, at least, a penalty was exacted before the sacrifice could be received. In certain cases of injury to a neighbour increased reparation was first made, and then the tres-

¹ Fairbairn, vol. ii. p. 350, who says that “ this view is now concurred in by Hengstenberg, Bähr, Kurtz, and others.”

² As in the cases of adultery above alluded to. A betrothed freewoman was punished by stoning (Deut. xxii. 24); while a bondwoman was only scourged (Lev. xix. 20).

¹ Magee, Note 37, p. 224. ² Litton's Bampton Lectures, App. E. p. 343.

pass-offering was brought³. The sacrifice discharged from the guilt of rebellion against the head of the state, but did not exempt from the necessity of making satisfaction to a neighbour. It may be doubted whether in some cases (as theft⁴ and the many offences punished by scourging⁵) the punishment by itself was not sufficient to save the theocratical standing of the offender without an atonement. However this may have been, we have no reason to suppose that sacrifice ever exempted from any legal punishment except excision; or that it was permitted at all, before the prescribed penalty had been undergone. After this had been inflicted, atonement interposed, to save from the further penalty of excision, to which every crime exposed the offender: inasmuch as "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them⁶;" and viewing transgression as a revolt against the authority of the law, "he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all⁷."

In short, the legal penalty belonged to the *crime* (as in other systems of polity); while the sacrifice made the necessary reparation for the rebellion against the head of the political system. So far the effect of sacrifice may be called a remission of the *sin*, as it is a remission of an offence against God. But then the sin so remitted was only against God as the temporal sovereign, and controller of the external conduct of his subjects. Sin, as the breach of that allegiance due to Him as the Father of spirits, and Searcher of hearts—an allegiance which was due prior to his taking his place as supreme magistrate in the Jewish polity—was beyond the influence of the sacrifices prescribed in that polity. It is necessary to bear this in mind, for the statement has been sometimes made, that "the ideas expressed by the terms, sin and crime, between which human legislators know so well how to distinguish, were, under the Jewish polity, perfectly interchangeable⁸." But this, though in one sense true, is very apt to mislead. Every crime in any state is also an offence against the supreme authority, which ordains the laws; and as, in the Jewish polity, God Himself was the supreme lawgiver and magistrate, every breach of the Mosaic law was an offence against God. But an offence

³ Lev. vi. 4—6. ⁴ Exod. xxii. 1—4. ⁵ Deut. xxv. 1—3; and Lev. xix. 20.

⁶ Gal. iii. 10; and Deut. xxvii. 26.

⁷ James ii. 10.

⁸ Litton's Bampton Lectures, p. 22.

against God, we call a sin: therefore it may be inferred that every crime under the Mosaic law was also a sin. This inference will, however, mislead us, unless we observe that *sin* is here taken in a much narrower sense than is usual with us; for it means an offence against God only in a limited temporal relation as the national sovereign. Sin, in this limited sense, was coextensive with crime, and was unquestionably atoned for by the Mosaic sacrifices; but sin in its wider sense was beyond their reach. Thus while it is undoubtedly true that the law promised to every man offering a piacular sacrifice (without any reservation about his sincerity or purity of heart) that "atonement" should be made for him, and his *sin* should "*be forgiven him*"—that is, his offence against the head of the Jewish nation; it is equally true and not at all inconsistent, when the Apostle says of these same sacrifices, that they "can never take away sins¹." Their efficacy in reconciling to God in his temporal relation made them symbolic of a higher sacrifice, which could reconcile to Him as the "living God," the rightful Lord of conscience; but of this reconciliation they were the symbols only, not the effectual conveyance. The *sin* of which the Mosaic law took cognizance, for punishment or remission, was not that sin from which the conscience required to be "purged," before it could find true peace, and "serve the living God²."

Thus, the main point remains unaffected by the peculiarities of the Mosaic law, viz., that, like all national codes, its external machinery refrained from interfering with sin (properly so called), and dealt only with what has always been deemed the legitimate province of public law, namely, overt criminal acts. Its sacrifices were part of the external machinery by which it effected this, and bore on the fortunes of the offerers, not as individual sinners, but as rebellious citizens, who were thereby saved from extrusion from the commonwealth.

In one way, indeed, even sinful thoughts and inward depravity may be considered as admitting of legal atonement. The law did not seek to enforce either penalty or sacrifice for such sin as lay beyond the cognizance of the human magistrate. But, as it demanded purity of heart, love to God, and love to man; many a

¹ Lev. i. 4; iv. 26. 31. 35; v. 6. 10. 16. 18; vi. 7; vii. 7.

² Heb. x. 11.

³ Heb. ix. 14.

one convicted by his own conscience of a breach of these precepts, would feel that he was guilty of treason against the Lawgiver, and owed Him a legal reparation; though his withholding this would not have injured his standing in the visible theocracy. Here, perhaps, such sacrifices as *freewill burnt-offerings* would naturally find place. But still they would be, like all other sacrifices, no more than "*expressions of allegiance*," which "*could propitiate God only in his temporal relation to his chosen people as their sovereign*."³ Some of the Jewish rabbis enumerate *sinful thoughts and words*, as well as *sins of omission* among the offences for which the burnt-offering "*made atonement*."⁴ But Outram very justly remarks, that they mention these things merely because no special piacular sacrifice had been ordained for them: "*Judæi autem eò magis holocaustis expiata judicant hæc, quæ diximus, peccatorum genera, utpote quibus expiandis victimæ proprie piaculares nequiquam institutæ essent*."⁵ Elsewhere he expresses his opinion that sacrifice was inapplicable to all these classes of sins. Thus, of *omitted duties*, he says, that there was no condition for their pardon except a diligent performance of such duties subsequently, and that this was a more proper atonement for them than sacrifice: "*atque ita sane, quam sacrificiis rectius redempta censebantur*." Unguarded *words and thoughts*, he adds, were forgiven on repentance without sacrifice: "*Quæ verò dictis, et cogitatis per imprudentiam peccabantur, ea profecto plura erant quam quibus singulis expiandis greges ulli suffecissent, ideoque pœnitenti cuique sine sacrificio condonata*."⁶ Whatever may be thought of the way in which he endeavours to account for it, his testimony is sufficiently clear as to the fact—that sacrifice had nothing to do with sinful thoughts, or with any thing which is outside the regular province of public law; however the piety of the individual might freely offer such tokens of renewed allegiance, where there had been rebellion against the sovereign, known to his conscience alone.

As regards *sin and trespass offerings*, all authorities agree that they were for overt acts, not for thoughts or even words. Outram mentions three undoubted characteristics of the offences to which sin-offerings were applicable, viz., 1, that they should be violations

³ Magee, Note 37, p. 225.

⁴ Lev. i. 4.

⁵ Outram, lib. i. cap. x. § 7.

⁶ Outram, lib. i. cap. xii. § 2.

of a prohibitory law; 2, that they should have been done through ignorance or inadvertence; 3, that they should be *in act, not in word or thought merely*: “*Tria illa primo posita, nimirum ut contra legem vetantem, ut per ignorantiam aut imprudentiam, ut opere quoque, non dictis tantum, aut cogitatis peccarentur, quæ hujusmodi victimis purganda erant, legis ipsa verba docere judicant*’.” Such, then, we may consider to be the characteristics of the transgressions to which the most normal of Jewish sacrifices was applicable; though under a law, many of whose ceremonies and prohibitions must have been continually violated unconsciously, a variety of further provisions were necessary for such errors. If the offender at any time became distinctly conscious of his offence, he was bound to bring his sin-offering; if he only suspected that he had offended, a special kind of trespass-offering (לֶחֶם חֵטְא וְשֵׁם חֵטְא *victima pro noxâ dubiâ*) was prescribed⁷. And as many offences might be committed, which would never be even suspected, sacrifices of general import, such as the freewill burnt-offering, would be the natural expression of pious solicitude for perfect legal obedience.

Of the same general character, as regards the whole nation, were the daily burnt-offerings and the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement. Any known error on the part of the nation required a special offering—a bullock⁸, or a bullock and a goat¹. The annual offering of the same kind was the general expiation of national uncleanness; itself the “shadow” of a deeper guilt, which such sacrifices could not reach². It is particularly necessary to observe, that we have no reason to suppose that these *national* sacrifices were applicable to any thing but *national* delinquencies³. To suppose them extending to individual transgressions (*except so far as these were considered to communicate pollution to the whole congregation*) is quite unwarranted. Hence the purification of the “sanctuary,” the “tabernacle,” and the “altar,” which belonged to the whole nation in common; and hence the special atonements for the high priest, as his errors defiled the whole people, whose mediator and representative he was⁴. “All

⁷ Outram, lib. i. cap. xii. § 2, p. 126.

⁸ Outram, lib. i. cap. xiii. § 1, p. 135, in explanation of Lev. v. 17.

⁹ Lev. iv. 13, 14.

¹ Numb. xv. 24.

² Heb. x. 3, 4.

³ See Outram, cap. xiv. De sacrificiis totius coetus.

⁴ Lev. xvi. 33.

their sins⁶ were atoned for once a year, so far as they communicated ceremonial uncleanness to the nation, and broke the outward covenant bond between God and his people. To suppose that the sacrifices of the great day of expiation availed for the remission of all sins of priests and people, is to mistake the object of all the national sacrifices; which was, not to procure remission for individual transgressors at all, but to purge away the uncleanness which national acts and private transgressions alike communicated to the congregation as a whole⁷. But even after the outward bond between God and his people had been thus vindicated and preserved by such public ordinances, there remained with the nation, as with the individual after his own special sacrifices, the inward spirit of obedience or disobedience to be dealt with by the invisible government of God; who eventually cut off the nation, as He had cut off the priestly family, because of their unfaithfulness; and punished them for that guilt, which the "blood of bulls and goats" was unable "to take away."

That the view here taken of the efficacy of legal sacrifice gives it a much lower place than that which is usually assigned to it in the religion of the Jew, cannot be denied; and to some it may appear that its dignity and value, as a type of the Christian Atonement, is thereby depreciated. The contrary, however, is the fact. To attribute to sacrifice the power of conveying "spiritual remission" to the penitent offerer, is to raise it above the place of a type, and to invest it with all the virtue and dignity of its anti-type. It is to make it the one spiritual instrument among many "carnal ordinances"—the sole reality in a world of "shadows." That the Jewish polity was a type of God's true spiritual kingdom, few will doubt. In like manner God's relation to his chosen people as their temporal sovereign, shadowed the deeper relationship in which He stands to the "mystical body" of Christ—"the blessed company of all faithful people⁸." His distribution of temporal sanctions typified that wider government, which will eventually "reward every man according to his works⁹." Canaan was the type of that better land, where "there remaineth a rest to the people of God⁹." And so on the analogy may be traced

⁶ Lev. xvi. 34.

⁷ Thanksgiving in Post-Communion Service.

⁸ Heb. iv. 9.

⁹ See Rom. 11.

⁹ Matt. xvi. 27.

to many minuter particulars, all bearing the same proportion to one another and to their antitype. Thus, that the forgiveness of sin against the theocracy, and the restoration of the offender to his standing as a Jewish citizen, should be a type of spiritual remission; and the sacrifices, by which it was procured, a type of the one sacrifice whereby we are incorporated into Christ's mystical body, and procure or regain a "citizenship in heaven¹:" is only to follow out the analogy, and preserve a constant proportion between type and antitype. But to make the forgiveness procured by the Jewish sacrifices in any way coextensive with the Gospel remission, is to destroy the proportions and symmetry of the whole typical economy. This is not to exalt the typical use of sacrifices, but to make them cease to be types. It has been fairly urged against the doctrine of transubstantiation that it "overthrows the nature of a sacrament²;" for it confounds the sign and the thing signified, and makes them not related but identical. It is a similar confusion to make the legal remission at once typical of, and coextensive with, the "spiritual remission and acceptance" which flow from the sacrifice of Christ.

The radical error which pervades most of the popular theories of our day about the Jewish economy, is the assumption that the legal sacrifices filled as important a place in the religion of a devout Jew, as the Atonement of the cross in ours. But such a position can only be maintained, by either exaggerating the efficacy of the Mosaic sacrifices, or disparaging the religion of the Israelite as a whole, and representing it as confined within the limits of the Mosaic ceremonial. The former is the course usually pursued by writers of the present day. They claim for the devout Jew, not only a spiritual religion almost on a level with the Christian's, but also sacrifices able to meet the demands of such a religion. But they might with just as much truth have preserved the proportion which they assume to have subsisted between his religion and his sacrifices, by leaving the latter on the level of "carnal ordinances;" and then maintaining that the whole religion of the Jew was in proportion to this, and that he was a mere religious infant, knowing and wishing for nothing beyond temporal happiness, and union with a visible theocracy. Only by one or other of these methods can the Mosaic sacrifices be maintained to have been to the Jews "*the*

¹ Phil. iii. 20; and Eph. ii. 6. 19.

² Article XXVIII.

substitute for what Christ's sacrifice is to us;³ and for the refutation of both theories (though all Scripture concurs) the Epistle to the Hebrews is abundantly sufficient. Its ninth and tenth chapters are absolutely irreconcilable with all views which regard the Mosaic sacrifices as in any way the instrument of procuring spiritual remission; while the eleventh chapter has been always a stumbling-block to those who would confine the hopes and aspirations of the Jewish saint within the circle of the Mosaic law, and its temporal sanctions. The truth is, that the sacrifices were *in God's temporal economy* a "substitute for what Christ's sacrifice is to us" in the Christian dispensation; but as the religion of God's saints of old was not confined to the hopes and promises of a temporal economy, just in proportion as these took a wider range did their sacrifices and other legal ordinances sink into comparative insignificance, and fall down to the less important place which they occupy in the sublimer teaching of the Prophets and the Psalms.

One reason which makes many writers seek to enhance to the utmost the efficacy of the Mosaic atonements, is their very decided opinion that sacrifice was ordained by God Himself immediately after the fall; and that, from the first, it possessed a very high degree of propitiatory efficacy. There is a difficulty, no doubt, in supposing the Mosaic sacrifices to have had less virtue than those which preceded them. If both were Divine institutions, it would be strange if that which came later in order of time, were inferior in importance and efficacy. Such a retrogression in the Divine appointments (though not impossible) is contrary to the general analogy of God's dispensations, which were progressive in their character. So far then the propitiatory efficacy of primitive sacrifice, if admitted, renders it highly probable that it had the same, if not a higher propitiatory virtue under the law.

But it is a very dangerous mode of seeking for truth, to begin by forming fixed opinions on so obscure a subject as that of primitive sacrifice, and then to allow these opinions to govern our interpretation of the clearer language of the Mosaic code, and the New Testament. The reverse is surely the more philosophic method of proceeding. The Mosaic law *may* throw some light on the brief nar-

³ Litton's Bampton Lectures, Appendix E. p. 340. Similarly Fairbairn, vol. ii. p. 234.

rative of the sacrifices of Abel and Noah, but we can scarcely add any thing to its fuller and more distinct records, from the fragmentary history of primeval saints. I have, therefore, no where mixed up my argument with theories about the origin of sacrifice, on which some of the greatest writers of our Church have held conflicting opinions⁴. Still, believing, as I do, that the Divine institution of sacrifice at the beginning is the simplest theory to account for the facts; I cannot refrain from saying a few words upon the consistency of this opinion (assuming it to be true) with the other views which I have advocated: although, should they be inconsistent, I would not hesitate to give up any view on so obscure a question, which clashed with the clear declarations of the New Testament, and the Mosaic law itself.

Archbishop Magee says (and it is the only reason he gives for attributing so high an efficacy under any circumstances to the legal sacrifices), that "as genuine and sincere acts of worship and "penitence, whenever the piety of the offerer rendered them such, "they must likewise have operated to procure that spiritual "remission and acceptance, which, antecedent to, and independent "of, the Levitical ordinances, they are found in several parts of "Scripture to have been effectual to obtain⁵."

Here we have the sole reason for the otherwise unsupported assertion, that the Levitical sacrifices possessed a spiritual efficacy, which yet, it is admitted, did not belong to them "by virtue of the positive institution⁶." They are supposed to have derived it by a primeval grant from God Himself. But even if we admit, notwithstanding the absence of any direct authority in Scripture, that sacrifice was probably instituted by God in the beginning, we cannot pretend that we have any certain knowledge of the benefits which He annexed to it. It may have been a mere symbol of future propitiation, to which no present promises were attached. Certainly we ought to measure its efficacy in the earliest times by that which we see God annexing subsequently to the Levitical sacrifices, rather than add to his express institution, in the latter case, from his presumed grant on a previous occasion. Indeed Archbishop Magee, after stretching to the utmost the records of

⁴ Spencer, Warburton, Tillotson, and Davison maintain that sacrifice was of human invention.

⁵ Magee, Note 37. p. 225.

⁶ Magee, Note 37, p. 226.

primitive sacrifice, can draw from them no stronger inference than this: that "upon the whole, sacrifice appears to have been ordained as a standing memorial of the death introduced by sin, and of that death which was to be suffered by the Redeemer¹."

But such an inference does not warrant the assertion, that sacrifices "antecedent to and independent of the Levitical ordinances are found in several parts of Scripture to have been effectual to obtain spiritual remission and acceptance for the penitent offerer²." Nor does he furnish any other evidence of the propitiatory efficacy here ascribed to primitive sacrifice which will bear a critical examination. Perhaps his strongest proof is derived from Lightfoot's ingenious, but novel interpretation of the words "sin lieth at the door³," which, if sound, would go far to establish, not only the Divine institution, but the expiatory power of the earliest sacrifices. This interpretation, however, which was unknown in the Christian Church till the time of Lightfoot, and which has been rejected by some of the best commentators in later times, is but slender ground on which to rest such important conclusions. For a full criticism on this text, and Archbishop Magee's other proofs, I must refer the student to Mr. Davison's able work, *An Inquiry into the Origin and Intent of Primitive Sacrifice*, which deserves an attentive perusal. His remarks on the absence of any evidence of the propitiatory nature of sacrifice before the law seem to me quite unanswerable, though I cannot give the same assent to his argument against its Divine institution. Though we cannot positively deny the existence of expiatory sacrifice before the law, we cannot safely push our conclusions in the opposite direction further than the cautious and learned Outram, who, having stated that holocausts and thank-offerings were in use prior to the giving of the law, confesses his inability to make the same assertion about expiatory sacrifice: "Jam vero sacra piacularia, qualia a Mose descripta sunt, usquamne forte in usu fuerint ante legem sacram Hebræis datam, ego minime definiverim⁴."

I would suggest the following as the most probable conjecture about the origin and progress of this rite, so far as we can gather from the fragmentary notices which comprehend the whole of

⁷ Magee, Discourse II. p. 37.

⁸ Magee, Note 37, p. 225.

¹ Gen. iv. 7.

² Outram, lib. i. cap. x. § 1, p. 107.

its history down to its formal incorporation into the Mosaic code.

It seems probable that God Himself instituted sacrifice soon after the fall, "as a standing memorial of the death introduced by sin, and of that death which was to be suffered by the Redeemer³,"—a memorial which should symbolically set forth the need of expiation, coupled with the hope of its attainment. Yet we have no reason to suppose that any promise was annexed to the rite of sacrifice, *further than belonged to every act of worship and obedience*⁴. It may have been the symbol, without being in any degree a "sacramental" conveyance of spiritual remission. On this supposition the Mosaic sacrifices were the first instance of any real efficacy being attached to symbolic sacrifice, and so furnish a natural step in advance of previous dispensations. Indeed (to pursue our conjectures where certainty is unattainable), it seems probable that specific benefits could not safely have been annexed to the sacrificial symbol at an earlier period, without the danger of tempting men to put that trust in the creature which is due only to the Creator. Such "*effectual* signs of grace"⁵ could perhaps only be used with safety when the true object of faith had been so fully revealed, as to mitigate the danger of resting in the sign to the neglect of the "thing signified." The establishment of the Jewish polity gave the opportunity of annexing a real and suitable blessing to symbolic sacrifice, because the blessing was precisely on a level with the sacrifice, so that they became the co-ordinate and harmonious types of the sacrifice of Christ, and the benefits to be procured thereby. In a temporal polity, every part of which was typical of the Gospel dispensation, and also possessed a temporary use of its own, sacrifice was naturally and safely joined to a real benefit, which held a place in the temporal kingdom precisely analogous to that which was to be filled by a greater forgiveness in the spiritual kingdom of heaven.

³ Magee, Discourse II. p. 37.

⁵ See NOTE 13.

⁴ See NOTE 12.

⁶ Article XXV.

LECTURE II.

THE THEORY OF SACRIFICE.

HEBREWS x. 8—10.

“Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

OUR inquiry into the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews, last Sunday, was confined to two leading points: the efficacy of the Mosaic sacrifices, and the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ. We then examined many important statements on both these points,—statements, however, which are all compressed into the brief assertion of the Apostle, that while the typical ordinances of the law sanctified only “to the purifying of the flesh,” the great sacrifice of Calvary is able to “purge the conscience” of the believer “from dead works to serve the living God.”

But one question of great interest still remains to be considered before we conclude our inquiry into

this portion of Scripture. If remission of sins, the purification of the conscience, and the perfecting of them that are sanctified, are distinctly ascribed in this Epistle to the offering of Christ once made—if they are connected with it as the effect with its proper cause; is any information given as to *how* it had that effect, as to the manner in which it operated so completely to restore the true relation between God and man? Of course I do not mean to ask whether the immediate bond of cause and effect be visible here (which would be more than we look for even in physical science), but *whether these facts are reducible to any known law, and resemble other sequences with which we are familiar?* This question, and the solutions of it that have been attempted, will occupy much of our attention hereafter. Our inquiry now is confined to one point, to ascertain whether the Epistle to the Hebrews, treating this whole subject of Christ's sacrifice with a fulness not to be met elsewhere, offers any solution of it, or materials for such a solution. Certainly it will be strange if it is to be found elsewhere in the sacred writings and yet omitted here, where the rest of the subject receives such full discussion. And, I may add, that if on a careful investigation we can find no trace in this Epistle of a theory explaining *how* the sacrifice of Christ produced the important effects so distinctly ascribed to it, it will prepare our minds, if not to expect, at least to feel no surprise at a similar silence on this point in the other books of Scripture.

There is one other passage, besides our text, which

might be supposed to throw light on this point; and it is that which, in its *other* bearings, we considered last Sunday. Let me repeat the words of the thirteenth and fourteenth verses of the ninth chapter for you once more. "*If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*"

It might seem, at first sight, from the expression *how much more*, that there was something in the offering of Christ which made it palpably efficacious for purging the conscience, so that you might infer that it did this from seeing how well fitted it was to do so. However, a little examination of the passage will show that there is no such *evident* adaptation of means and end, that from the knowledge of the means, it might have been possible to predict the result. Wonderful as it is that Christ should "through the eternal Spirit have offered himself without spot to God;" much as it might awaken the hope of some great result from so stupendous an offering: it would be impossible, without express revelation, to know what that result was. I do not think, therefore, that any more can fairly be inferred from the Apostle's words than this: that if the ashes of a heifer, and the blood of bulls and goats, things in themselves so mean and despicable, could procure, *by God's appointment*, a real though limited expiation; how much more

natural (πόσῳ μᾶλλον), or in other words, *how much less strange*, that the offering of the eternal and spotless Son of God should procure that greater remission of which conscience testified the need. The increased value of the effect is inferred from the increased value of the offering; but *in neither case* is the fitness of the offering to produce such effects explained. In both cases alike it is presupposed as a matter of *Divine arrangement*. And to go further than this—to inquire into the reason of any arrangement which had been traced up to God, is a course that, from what we know of their “modes of thought,” would scarcely have occurred to the mind of an Apostle; unless it were to repel some presumptuous question like that put to St. Paul by the Corinthian sages—“How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come¹?” And doubtless the question as to *how* the offering of Christ procured remission of sins, if asked at all (as it probably rarely was in those days), would have received a like indignant reply.

But some have thought that an answer, or something like an answer, is to be found in the words of our text for to-day. Let us then examine its meaning.

The quotation from the Psalms², which is repeated in the text, is introduced with the strong assertion³ that it is “*not possible* that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin.” Why it was impossible it is not hard to see, if we bear in mind the conclu-

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 35.

² Ps. xl. 6, 7.

³ Ver. 4.

sions we came to about the Mosaic sacrifices. There was palpably a natural insufficiency in such external acts to cleanse the conscience. But this was not the only thing in the Apostle's mind. To have inferred the impossibility of their taking away sins from this alone—from their want of any *perceptible fitness* to produce such an effect—would be more in accordance with the style of argument of a modern rationalist than the manner of an Apostle. When he pronounced it impossible that these things should take away sins, he doubtless had in view what both he and his hearers were alike aware of—that *this natural insufficiency was not compensated by any Divine appointment*, for the promise of the law did not reach so far. Reasoning merely from their natural fitness, he would have decided equally against their “purifying the flesh,” as against their “taking away sins ;” but as he ascribes to them power to effect the former, but not the latter, it is evident he is thinking rather of the virtue communicated by Divine appointment, than of any natural efficacy ⁴. Having thus strongly asserted the insufficiency of the “blood of bulls and goats,” he proceeds to contrast with it the efficacy of the offering of Christ, and for this purpose he describes it in the prophetic language of the fortieth Psalm.

Of the critical questions connected with this quotation, and the difficulty of reconciling its language (taken from LXX) with the Hebrew text; it is not necessary for my present purpose to say any thing.

⁴ NOTE 14.

In fact the disputed clauses form no part of the argument at all. The quotation has this peculiarity, that it is repeated; and on the second occasion the Apostle gives it in a shorter form, omitting some clauses. Now this is exactly what a writer does, when some parts of a quotation are irrelevant. If he gives it at full length at first for the sake of accuracy, he afterwards calls special attention to the important parts of the passage, by quoting them alone. I chose, therefore, for my text, only the passage which contains the repetition of the quotation; as there can be no doubt, that we have here all which the Apostle thought important; unembarrassed by the critical difficulties that encumber the passage at full length. The quotation then, as repeated, and separated into its two leading parts, with the Apostle's comments upon it, stands thus: "*Above, when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; (which are offered by the law;) then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.*"

The natural inference from these words of the Psalmist, thus adopted to express the difference between the legal sacrifices and that of Christ, is this: that God, though appointing the legal sacrifices for wise purposes, and accepting them to a certain extent, yet had no real pleasure in the things themselves; but that, on the other hand, he had an actual love for, and delight in that which was to supersede them. "*He taketh away the first, that he may establish the*

second." The first is described as consisting of "sacrifice, and offering, and burnt offerings, and sin offerings;" the second is described as Christ's doing the will of God: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."

Perhaps the most striking point in this contrast is, that on the one side of the comparison are placed certain external ritual acts prescribed by Moses; and on the other, *not* those external acts of Christ such as his blood-shedding and violent death which had been shown to be their antitypes, *but* that obedience and submission to the will of God, which are by us now generally recognised as necessary to give value to any mere external act. This language, then, adopted from one of the prophetic Psalms, seems to breathe the same spirit which is to be found in so many passages of the Prophets, where sacrifices are spoken slightly of as compared to moral excellence. Of this the fiftieth⁵ and fifty-first⁶ Psalms and the first chapter of Isaiah⁷ afford striking instances; but perhaps the best example is the well-known passage from the Prophet Micah, which bears a striking general resemblance to the words quoted in my text. It is this—"*Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee,*

⁵ Ver. 8—15.⁶ Ver. 16, 17.⁷ Ver. 11—15.

O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God^a ?”

Does our text then teach no more than the ancient proverb adopted by our Lord, “I will have mercy and not sacrifice^b ;” that is, spiritual religion, not mere ritual worship? It does, indeed, plainly imply this; and, apart from its special application to Christ in this place, it is doubtless what lies on the surface of this quotation from the Psalms. But does its peculiar application here teach no more? The contrast it unfolds is in some respects a strange one, and rather different from what the previous train of thought might have led us to anticipate. The Apostle had before compared the external aspect of the Mosaic service with that of Christ’s mediation, and traced a close correspondence between them; a correspondence so close as to be unaccountable, except on the supposition of one being the preordained type or “*shadow*,” as he calls it, of the other. He now proceeds to contrast them, in order to show (an object he never for a moment loses sight of) the superior excellence of the Christian dispensation. We might expect that the spirit in which Christ came into the world to sacrifice Himself, should find its proper counterpart in the spirit with which the Jewish worshipper, or high priest, offered the blood of bulls and goats. But whatever the latter may have been (sometimes doubtless altogether ritual, at

^a Micah vi. 6—8.

^b Matt. ix. 13; and xii. 7; and Hos. vi. 6.

others rising to a high degree of piety), it was not necessary to the *promised* efficacy of the Mosaic offering.

No hint is conveyed in the law of Moses, that where the ritual was strictly observed, the sacrifice might yet be deprived of its proper effect by the absence of piety and true penitence. The High Priest was threatened with loss of life, if he entered into the most Holy Place without the atoning blood, and the proper purifications: but there the requirements of the law ceased¹; and he who made atonement for others might himself (as often happened) be devoid of true piety. In short, the Jewish sacrifices were truly efficacious (so far as their limited power extended), in virtue of mere ritual exactness². They belonged only to the domain of external law, to the machinery which dealt with overt acts; not to the government which extended remission to spiritual disobedience³. The Apostle, therefore, fairly contrasts, as the essence of the two dispensations, these heterogeneous things; the external and unspiritual offerings of the Levitical priesthood, and the spiritual obedience and self-sacrifice of Christ⁴. He says that God "taketh away the first that he may establish the second;" and he sums up the benefits derivable to us from this last in the words, "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Here, then, as almost all expositors admit, we have

¹ See NOTE 15.

² See NOTE 16.

³ See LECTURE I.

⁴ See NOTE 17.

reached the highest point of view to which this Epistle conducts us; the climax of that superiority of the Christian over the Jewish dispensation, which it was the main purpose of the writer to exhibit in the minute comparison he institutes between them. After repeating the substance of that comparison, in the few verses following, he dismisses the subject; and enters at the nineteenth verse on that course of practical exhortation which forms the conclusion of the Epistle. *Here, then, or not at all, we have the writer's theory of sacrifice—his view of the nature of its efficacy.* Let us see what the information he gives amounts to.

The most important point seems to be this: that, after dwelling on the outward and historic aspect of Christ's work—his shedding of blood, his ascension into heaven, the true Holy of Holies (things which though like, yet contrasted advantageously with the "worldly sanctuary" and "ordinances" of the law); he concludes by putting prominently forward that which imparted true greatness and efficacy to them all—the *Father's appointment*, and the *Son's willing self-sacrificing obedience to this will*. Even the blood and cross of Christ are regarded here chiefly as the outward *phenomena*, in which his readiness to do the will of God found *its appointed manifestation*—themselves but the sacramental seal of a higher offering. It is no longer even his most precious blood, but that which made his blood beyond

^s Heb. ix. 1.

all price, which rises clearly before the writer's mind as the fulfilment of the Psalmist's words; just as in the other passage we discussed, when he mentions the blood of Christ as the instrument for purifying the conscience, he adds, as if to guard against any unworthy view of it, "who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God;" words which seem the only adequate description of Him who says, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."

Such a view of the nature of what Christ has done for us, does certainly carry us one step further than any mere comparison of the external phenomena of the two dispensations; and shows us that the highest point in which we can view the sacrifice of Christ is one of contrast, not of correspondence, to those of the law. What, then, becomes of the argument on which Mr. Jowett bases his theory of the discrepancy between the doctrine of this Epistle, and of those which are unquestionably St. Paul's? Of St. Paul, he says, "It is the opposition, and not the "identification of the Law and the Gospel which is the "leading thought of his mind. But in the Epistle to "the Hebrews they are fused in one⁶." This is, no doubt, partially true; but if the Epistle to the Hebrews enumerates minutely the points of correspondence, it is only that it may lead us on, as we have seen, to that higher point of view in which it is contrast only that appears. This Epistle, being intended for Hebrew converts, does not indeed exhibit

⁶ Jowett, vol. ii. p. 476.

naked contrasts which might offend; but comparisons which, under an outward similarity, reveal a deep and essential difference. This is the grand characteristic of the Epistle. Every great feature of Christianity is made to rest on some symbol or principle venerated by those addressed; while its vast superiority is enforced with equal clearness, but in such a way as to smooth down the roughness of the path from one system to the other. But that the teaching of this Epistle is at variance with St. Paul's, or that it assigns to the Law and the Gospel a relation contradictory to that given them in other scriptures, is an assertion of which no proof has been offered, and of which we may safely assert that none can be given.

And though it is no part of our immediate subject (which is to free the doctrine of the Atonement from the mistakes of Christians, not the assaults of unbelievers), let me ask, with our text before us, what becomes of all that profane abuse of Christianity as a "theology of blood and wounds," in which certain rationalistic enemies of the historic truth of Scripture have been wont to indulge? Or what becomes of the older and still coarser sneers of Voltaire against sacrifice⁷, which I will not offend your ears by repeating? If external circumstances of painful suffering are inconsistent with intellectual greatness, or spiritual meaning, then must we abjure all heroism which has shone forth from the midst of bloodshed;

⁷ See Du Maistre, "*Soirées de St. Petersbourg*," p. 374.

we must cast off our admiration for that greatness which manifested itself in the endurance of suffering, or torture, or death. Then must we strike the brightest pages from the annals of our race, and cease to reverence the martyr and the patriot; because the scenes in which their honors have been won were such as it would have been painful and revolting for us to witness. No; whether it be the suffering of the patriot, or the martyr, which awakens our gratitude and love, it is not the ugly wounds, the gushing blood, the body bereft of that life and beauty it received from its Creator, which are the objects of our regard; but the unbending will, the love of truth and right, the burning zeal, which all these images of horror could not extinguish. And when we raise our eyes to Him, so far above all that human patriotism, or human devotion to religion or country has ever produced; when with awe and reverence we gaze upon that bleeding form, which was "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities⁸:" are we so dull of heart, and slow of understanding, that we cannot pierce through the veil of flesh, the external phenomena of suffering, and see (what the Apostle would here show us) that spirit of meek obedience, of self-sacrificing, self-annihilating submission, which, first manifested at his incarnation, when He "took upon him the form of a servant⁹," and proved more and more as He trod the path of his voluntary humiliation upon earth, found at last its

⁸ Isa. liii. 5.

⁹ Phil. ii. 7.

utmost trial, its highest consummation in the pain and ignominy of the cross?

But when we have advanced thus far, we have reached the furthest point from which Scripture, and the limited faculties of man enable us to contemplate the *intrinsic value of Christ's offering*. If we appreciate true greatness, we must see in it, indeed, "the greatest moral act ever done in this world¹;" an act far more wonderful as an instance of obedience, than that primeval act of transgression as an instance of rebellion and refusal to "do the will of God." But because of the *moral greatness* here attributed to the offering of Christ, must we deny that it was a sacrifice and ransom for sin? Shall we say with Professor Jowett, "Not the sacrifice, nor the satisfaction, nor the ransom; but the greatest moral act ever done in this world, is the assurance to us that God in Christ is reconciled to the world?" Shall we thus make the preciousness of the victim an argument against the reality and expiatory power of his sacrifice? Because of that moral greatness in the life and death of Christ, which makes them our perfect example, must we refuse to ascribe to them any atoning power? Such reasoning would not only be inconsequent, but completely opposed to the object which the Apostle had in view in the words of our text.

For consider why it is that he thus exhibits to us the inner aspect of moral submission, which gave value to the blood of the cross. Was it that he

¹ Jowett, vol. ii. p. 481.

might hold up that moral greatness as our example; or that he might represent the obedience as every thing, and the manner of its manifestation through sacrifice as nothing? These are plainly not his objects here. He all along addresses those who regarded sacrifices as an essential part of religion, and were ready enough to admit the expiatory virtue of those ordained by Moses, if not to ascribe to them a higher efficacy than the law itself warranted². From this admission he proceeds to argue that Christ's death was the true sacrifice; and He Himself the true priest, who alone procured that remission which the law showed to be needful, yet did not supply. His positive statements on this point we have already sufficiently considered. But besides this, he so far condescends to enforce these statements by argument as to show, that from the greater intrinsic value of Christ's offering it was natural to expect this more extensive remission. His argument (so far as he meant it for argument) amounts to this: *By as much as* He who "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God," is better than the "blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer;" and *by as much as* He that "came to do the will of God," is more excellent than the sacrifices, and burnt-offerings, and sin-offerings, which are offered under the law: *by so much* is the remission which Christ's sacrifice procured superior to that external righteousness produced by the legal offer-

² See NOTE 18.

ings. If the one availed to the purifying of the flesh, "*how much more*" shall the other extend to the cleansing of the conscience; *how natural that* that sin which the legal sacrifices could not reach should be taken away by Him who came "to do the will of God," so that we should be "sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all?"

This exhibition, then, of the essence of Christ's work, is not made by the Apostle in order to substitute obedience for atonement³; but rather to enhance the value of that atonement: nor yet to show *how* Christ's offering was fitted (according to our modes of thinking) to secure expiation. He does not reduce its operation to any known natural law, that will satisfy our philosophical curiosity. He merely reduces it to the class of expiatory sacrifices, in which the connexion of means and end was not questioned by those for whom he wrote. But we may remark, that to reduce the new doctrine of "Christ crucified" to the laws which included all previous atonements known and recognised as God's appointments, is a proceeding strictly analogous to reducing some novel phenomenon in natural science to a previously ascertained general law. In this case, we are said to explain, or account for a novel fact, by showing that it is reducible to the same general expression or law, under which we have already classed other more familiar facts. *The explanation of the Atonement given in the Epistle to the Hebrews amounts to this*

³ See NOTE 19.

—that it is shown to be similar to older and well-recognised appointments of God, and governed by the same laws ; so that the same generic terms, sacrifice and expiation, may be applied to both alike. The natural philosopher explains phenomena, by reducing them to some natural law ; while the Apostle gives a similar explanation of the greatest supernatural event contained in his creed, by showing its similarity to God's other and older supernatural appointments. The whole value of such a method depends on the previous habits of thought, and belief of those addressed ; and therefore is less suited to convince us, if we call for proof. In fact what the modern critic means, when he demands an explanation of the Atonement, is—that it should be shown to be reducible to some well-known natural law which *he* recognises ; just as the Hebrews here addressed recognised the expiatory power of sacrifice. How far this is possible will furnish matter for future consideration. Meanwhile I would only observe, that, towards forming a theory of the Atonement of this kind, the Epistle to the Hebrews, though the fullest and most detailed of the Scriptural writings on sacrifice, gives us no assistance.

Perhaps too, while on this subject, it may be well to remark, how many things, which are often considered essential in modern statements of the Atonement, are omitted here. No where do we find more distinct assertions of our Lord's Divine nature than in this Epistle, and no where greater anxiety to show the intrinsic value of his sacrifice. Yet these two points

are not viewed in the same connexion which so many give them now. Christ's Divine nature is not dwelt upon as imparting an infinite value to sufferings, which thus became an equivalent for those which all mankind were condemned to. Nor is the value of Christ's offering made to rest, either on the amount of his sufferings, or their value *considered as mere suffering* at all. The value assigned to them so far as its nature is revealed, is essentially a moral value; in which suffering is efficacious chiefly as the manifestation of submission to the Divine will—as the appointed course of Him who came to “do the will of God.” It is indeed said that Christ, when He “offered himself without spot to God,” did so “*through the eternal Spirit* ;” words which (notwithstanding the disagreement of commentators) seem very plainly to refer to his resolution, made when He had no other than *his eternal spiritual nature*, to take upon Him “the form of a servant.” And doubtless, if this be the meaning of the words, they are meant to set forth the infinite worthiness of Him who vouchsafed to redeem us, and the wonderful depth of his love and condescension. But this is very different (as we shall see hereafter) from communicating an infinite value to suffering as suffering. In short, though Christ is revealed in this Epistle as “tasting death for every man⁴,” and “offering himself without spot to God,” and thereby procuring remission of sins; there is no mention of his suffering and obedience under the notion of equiva-

⁴ Heb. ii. 9.

lents for those of men, in the sense in which these words are used in the ordinary language of mankind.

There is indeed one way in which the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews may be considered as showing the use which may be legitimately made of the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ, to throw light on that of his Atonement. The stress laid every where in this Epistle on *his* Divine nature, who was "the brightness of his Father's glory⁵;" "the Son over his own house⁶;" who "obtained by inheritance a more excellent name than the angels⁷;" who, not as a mere man, but "through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God⁸;" all these points, which are studiously dwelt upon in contrast to the poverty and insufficiency of the Mosaic offerings, prepare our minds to admit the possibility of results flowing from the offering of Christ, different in kind as well as degree from any benefits which man receives from man in the ordinary course of the world. The introduction of an agency, so far transcending those with whose laws and mode of operation we are conversant, prepares us to expect, or at least to see the possibility of consequences, which cannot be classed with the phenomena of common life, or the influences and customs of human society. The peculiar nature of these consequences did not present the same difficulty to the Hebrew convert as it does to us; for he was already trained to expect effects of a similar kind from his sacrifices.

⁵ Ch. i. 3.

⁶ Ch. iii. 6.

⁷ Ch. i. 4.

⁸ Ch. ix. 14.

The chief stumbling-block in his mind was the greater magnitude of the result reaching so far as to obviate the necessity for any further sacrifice: and to this difficulty in particular the Apostle addresses his argument, when he appeals to the Divinity and spotless holiness of Christ as sufficiently accounting for the greatness of the consequences. He makes no attempt to show how any sacrifice could procure remission; for this point was not a difficulty to him, or to those for whom he wrote: he merely argues for the greater extent of the remission procured from the dignity of the priest, and the excellence of the sacrifice.

But if the Apostle thus uses Christ's Divine nature and spiritual perfection, as grounds for expecting from his sacrifice a more extensive remission than that which his readers looked for from the blood of bulls and goats: *we* may in like manner urge on those who stumble at the whole notion of atonement, or sacrificial expiation, as something strange and inexplicable; that nothing but some great effect upon the destinies of man—an effect different in kind as well as degree from those with which we are familiar—would seem to warrant such an interposition. What its actual results were, we can only learn from revelation; but that they should transcend the ordinary consequences of human mediation, and follow different laws, seems only what might naturally be anticipated from the dignity of the agent, and the unprecedented nature of the means employed. If, therefore, in the Scripture account of what Christ has done for us, we

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find statements of which the most natural interpretation points to changes in the condition of man, and his relation to his God, unlike any thing we were previously acquainted with; and in which the strangeness of the results is only surpassed by the mystery of their connexion with the acts and sufferings of our Redeemer: surely there is nothing here to contradict our reason; nothing which ought to tempt us to narrow the meaning of Scripture language, and contract the extraordinary results it seems to indicate within the narrower bounds of our natural experience.

When we have thus brought down the teaching of Scripture to the supposed requirements of reason, must it not strike us that the interposition of Christ is out of proportion to the results accomplished; and that a mere man might as well have done every thing which is attributable to the ordinary action of one man's life upon another? The heroism of the martyr, the purity of the saint, every thing which could operate on mankind in the way of teaching, example, and sympathy, might conceivably have been united in a mere human prophet. If, therefore, we would narrow the work of Christ within these human limits, we are likely to be induced similarly to contract the meaning of those passages which speak of his nature, and preserve the symmetry of our system by making *him* to be merely man, whose acts we will not admit to be more than human. Such has ever been the tendency of theological speculation. The doctrines of the Divinity of Christ, and of an atonement passing the bounds of human understanding for the sin of man,

have generally been received or rejected together. Both truths are mysterious, and the connexion between them partakes of the same character. Both stand on the same ground, as known to us by Scripture alone, and only partially comprehensible. By minds willing to bow to the authority of revelation both are equally received; and a certain proportion is observed to subsist between them, though their connexion can be so imperfectly traced. By those, on the other hand, who are bent on making their own understanding the measure of revealed truth, they are alike rejected; and there is the less reason for retaining either, if the other has been previously discarded. To those, then, who believe in the Divinity of Christ (which seems so clearly taught in this Epistle), there is no *a priori* improbability, but rather the reverse, that his incarnation and sufferings may be the cause of changes in the condition of man as far transcending the ordinary sequences of human life, as the nature and power of the Godhead surpass those of the greatest martyrs and most illustrious benefactors of the human race⁹.

What these results were we have already learned in part from the explicit statements of the Epistle to the Hebrews. All that can be included under the notion of sacrificial expiation—of full remission of sins—of cleansing the conscience, is there distinctly ascribed to the “offering of Christ once for all,”—to those acts of his which correspond to the sacerdotal functions of the Jewish High Priest.

⁹ See H. Goodwin's Hulsean Lectures for 1855, p. 32.

And when we come to examine other books of Scripture, we shall find these benefits expanded to an extent which refuses to be confined within the limits of sacrificial expiation, or to find an adequate expression in the types and language of a sacrificial system¹. But this will furnish matter for future Lectures. In conclusion, I would make a few remarks on the preparation made by the ancient sacrifices for the mediation of Christ.

The Epistle to the Hebrews shows us how admirably the institution of expiatory sacrifices in the Jewish economy served to prepare the way for the principal doctrine of Christianity. In this, as in other things, "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ²." These sacrifices taught at once the *need* of expiation, and the *possibility* of it; besides by their external aspect preparing the mind for the reception of the great stumbling-block of the Gospel—the ignominious death of its Founder. Conscience testified the need of an atonement. Sacrifice recognised that need, and to some extent made provision for it, thus keeping alive that subjective religion which forgiveness, without atonement, would have tended to deaden. Still further, it gave a definite form to the ideas of expiation; so that when a new sacrifice was preached which could cleanse from "all sin³," it found ideas prepared and educated to rest in it as their proper satisfaction, without any sceptical doubts, any captious inquiries "how (according to natural law) these things

¹ See conclusion of Lecture V. ² Gal. iii. 24. ³ 1 John i. 7.

could be⁴." Nay, more; their expiatory system taught the Jews to acquiesce in the fact of atonement, without any further questioning; as the effects of sacrifice, from long familiarity, must have seemed to them eminently *natural*, and not requiring to be traced to any simpler law before they could be understood. And thus the most elaborate defence of the Atonement to be found in the sacred writings is satisfied with explaining it in conformity with the sacrificial language and ideas of the Jewish faith.

What the law thus did for the Jew, his sacrifices must in some measure have done for the heathen to whom the Gospel was preached. Whatever may be thought of the origin of pagan sacrifices, and whatever barbarity and vice may have accompanied them, we must consider it a providential circumstance that they fostered far and wide the belief in the *need* and *possibility* of expiation, and prepared men to regard the sufferings and death of the Founder of the new religion in a higher aspect than that which these events at first sight presented. Heathens as well as Jews could thus understand the language, and enter into the ideas of those who preached the sacrifice of Christ as the *propitiation for the sins of the world*⁵."

We, indeed, are obliged to view it somewhat differently. We are not surrounded by a ritual system, whose ceremonies and ideas can become the exponents of a higher mystery; but we are obliged simply to take the statements of the Apostles as to the effects

⁴ John iii. 9.

⁵ See NOTE 20.

of Christ's sacrifice, and by them to explain the previous offerings of the law. We rather bring the knowledge of Christianity to the explanation of the law: the Jew brought the knowledge of his law as the key to Christianity. But be the order of our learning what it may, the one essential point stands forth in prominent relief—the need of atonement to “purge the conscience,” and the crucified Jesus as that “full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world,” ordained by the will of the omnipotent Father Himself, “by which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

LECTURE III.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT, AND ITS ASSAILANTS.

MATTHEW xxvi. 28.

“This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

My two former Lectures on the doctrine of the Atonement were confined almost exclusively to the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews on this subject. This restriction was necessary for two reasons. First, because, as that Epistle contains the fullest explanation of sacrifice to be found in the Bible, it would seem the most natural course to master its teaching first; and then apply it to explain the briefer notices of the same subject to be found elsewhere. Secondly, because by considering its teaching and that of the rest of the New Testament separately, we are enabled to judge of the truth of the assertion which has been so confidently made, that they contain conflicting views of the relation between the Law and the Gospel; and that, while St. Paul dwells on the opposition between the two, the Epistle to the Hebrews makes

them almost identical. We saw that the supposition on which this opinion was mainly grounded—namely, that the Mosaic law was unduly exalted and assimilated to the Gospel in the Epistle to the Hebrews—was the reverse of the fact; for that the chief difficulty we had to encounter in our exposition of that Epistle was the very depreciating tone in which it speaks of the legal ordinances and sacrifices, and the low value it assigns to all that was most precious in the eyes of a Jew. But neither our proof of this point, nor our review of Christ's work, regarded as a sacrifice, will be complete, till we have examined the sacrificial language used in the other books of the New Testament.

On most of the texts which treat of Christ's work as a sacrifice it will not be necessary to say much, as almost the same remarks apply to them all. But before enumerating them, I have selected one for a more careful examination. The words of our Lord in my text are an epitome of the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Indeed, so remarkable is the likeness, that it would almost seem as if that Epistle were meant expressly to expand and explain the laconic words of my text. It forms, as you know, part of the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper, of which one of the principal uses was to commemorate the closing scene of his earthly sufferings and labours. In instituting that sacrament our Lord Himself instructs us how we are to regard his death. He tells us that his "blood" was to be "shed" in ratification of the "new covenant" between

God and man, and "for many for the remission of sins." Can any one doubt that He here speaks of Himself as a *sin-offering*, and his death as an *expiatory sacrifice*? The distinct mention of his "blood"—apart from his body—points at once to that in which the expiatory power of the sacrifice was always considered to reside, and recalls the words that may be regarded as the key to the Jewish sacrificial system: "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for (or rather *through*) the soul¹."

But lest there should be any doubt as to the reason of the prominence assigned to his blood-shedding in the eucharistic commemoration, He adds, "shed for the remission of sins²." Thus, like the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, our Lord not only speaks of his death in general terms, borrowed from expiatory sacrifice, but distinctly couples it with the *remission of sins as its specific object and effect*—as that benefit which was to be uppermost in the minds of all who should drink of that commemorative cup. It would be hard to devise a plainer assertion of the expiatory power of Christ's death within so short a compass, or more faithfully to epitomize the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

We may add another striking point to this parallel. In the Epistle to the Hebrews Christ's death is spoken

¹ Lev. xvii. 11. The translation *through the soul* (or nephesh), *i.e.* of the victim, is now generally received. See NOTE 23.

² See NOTE 21.

of, not only as a piacular sacrifice, but as a sacrifice ratifying a covenant, and is compared with that by which Moses ratified the older covenant between God and Israel in the wilderness³. Thus much at least is plain in the otherwise difficult passage (Heb. ix. 15—20), and in the strictly parallel expression, “through the blood of the everlasting covenant⁴,” where the word *διαθήκη* is rightly translated “covenant,” as it should have been in my text and elsewhere⁵. Moreover, the words “new” and “for remission of sins” seem to refer pointedly to the words of Jeremiah⁶, twice quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews⁷, in which God promised to make a “new covenant” with his people,—one in virtue of which their “sins and iniquities were to be remembered no more.” These texts in Hebrews, and our Lord’s words at the institution of the Eucharist, are the only passages in which this aspect of Christ’s sacrifice is brought under our notice; and they complete the parallel between his brief sentence in my text and the fuller teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The one is, as I have said, an exact epitome of the other.

But the sacrificial aspect here given to Christ’s death is not only asserted in our Lord’s words, but implied in his actions; for He was then celebrating the Passover, itself a eucharistic commemoration of the original Passover in Egypt. He was at the same

³ Exod. xxiv. 5—8.

⁴ Heb. xiii. 20. See also Heb. x. 29, “Counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing.”

⁵ See NOTE 22.

⁶ Jer. xxxi. 31—34. ⁷ Heb. viii. 8—12; and x. 16, 17.

time instituting a feast that was to take its place, and to be the commemoration of another event. How plainly did such an institution, at such a time, imply a similarity between the two subjects of commemoration; that is, between his death and the original Passover. His actions on this occasion implied what St. Paul afterwards translated into words by saying, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us^{*}." Thus our Lord's act in instituting the Supper, was in effect proclaiming Himself as the new Paschal offering; and comparing his "blood shed for the remission of sins," with that blood which stood between the firstborn of Israel and the uplifted arm of Jehovah.

But we may avail ourselves still further of our Lord's acts on this occasion, as a commentary on his words. Have we any doubt as to the meaning of the sacrificial language in which He speaks of his death? Are we tempted, like some, to think that it was nothing but an illustrious martyrdom described in sacrificial language, such as was familiar to a Jew? What, then, does its commemoration teach us? Can we find any meaning in a feast on bread and wine, as commemorating heroic sufferings and a violent death, which were meant to induce us to forsake sin solely through the influence such an example might exercise upon our minds, but were destitute of any more direct power for its removal? Surely the partaking of that bread and wine which are the nourishment of our vital powers, and the emblems of social joy,

^{*} 1 Cor. v. 7.

is a strange way of commemorating a violent death: unless that death could minister to the support of a higher vitality; unless it were something more than a mere splendid spectacle of heroic endurance. Indeed, on the supposition of Christ's death not being a real atoning sacrifice, but a martyrdom described in sacrificial language, it is hard to give any plausible account of the significance of the Lord's Supper, even as a mere commemoration¹. Whereas, as a commemoration *of*, and a feast *upon*, a sacrifice, it naturally enough took the place of the ordinary paschal supper; and filled a similiar, though more important, place in the new dispensation. The bread, not only broken but eaten; and the wine, not only poured out but partaken of by all present, lose all purpose and significancy unless they are believed to have been "ordained for the continual remembrance," not only of the death and martyrdom, but "*of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and the benefits we receive thereby.*"

We may remark, that the conclusions thus drawn from our text are quite independent of the controversies that have been waged about its interpretation, as bearing on the nature and efficacy of the sacrament. For however closely the doctrine of the Atonement may be coupled with that of the sacraments, our present subject is only the Atonement itself; not the means, whether sacramental or otherwise, by which it may be appropriated. Our busi-

¹ See Whately on Sacraments, p. 105.

ness, now, is with the truths to which the sacraments point, not with the sacraments themselves. Thus, on our subject, this text² throws a clear and steady light, though it may present an aspect of doubt and obscurity to those who consult it for a different purpose.

Before leaving the consideration of our text, let me observe how utterly the theory which would account for the sacrificial language applied to Christ's work by a *rhetorical*³ use of *Jewish figures*, fails in its application to this passage. Here is no speech before a multitude, no apology for Christianity to a set of unbelieving Jews, who might be soothed by hearing the obnoxious tenets of the new faith clothed in imagery borrowed from the ritual they so blindly revered. How little do our Lord's recorded discourses lead us to expect concession to Jewish prejudice, or looseness and inaccuracy of expression, such as this figurative theory assumes. But least of all was there room for such rhetorical language here. The solemnity of the occasion, the brevity of his words, the fact that He was then instituting a rite which was to form part of all Christian worship in every country where the Gospel should be preached to the end of time, alike forbid our supposing that our Lord could have used any figure borrowed from Jewish ceremonial, unless it were the

² The same may be said of John vi., of which I have made no use in these Lectures, though I believe it to be perfectly inexplicable unless the reality of Christ's Atonement is admitted.

³ See NOTE 7.

very fittest that could be found to embody his meaning. The Apostles, we are constantly reminded by these figurative interpreters, were Jews; and attached to sacrificial language and ceremonies. Doubtless; and for that very reason they could only have understood our Lord's words in accordance with their previous education; and our Lord must have used the words, just because He knew they would so understand Him, and because He wished them to do so. If He did not mean to say that his death was an expiatory sacrifice, and that it was to procure remission of sins, just as the Apostles expected certain blessings from the sin-offerings prescribed by the law; He was using language that He knew would be misunderstood by those who heard Him, and by every Christian Church which should receive the Gospel from their lips.

But, perhaps, the best way of showing the futility of such explanations will be to apply to our text the interpretation given on the figurative principle of a similar passage. Professor Jowett comments thus on the words "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins⁴." He says, "When it is said that Christ "gave Himself for our sins, *or as a sin-offering*, the "shadow must not be put in the place of the substance, or the Jewish image substituted for the "truth of the Gospel⁵." He then makes some general remarks on such imagery, apparently for no other purpose than to deprive it of all certainty of meaning,

⁴ Gal. i. 4.

⁵ Jowett, vol. i. p. 209.

and represent it as either vague or unintelligible to us. He winds up his comment with the following words: "That in general the thing meant by them" (*i. e.* sacrificial figures) "is, that Christ took upon Him human flesh, that He was put to death by sinful men, and raised men out of the state of sin, in this sense taking their sins upon Himself." And this is gravely put forward as an adequate interpretation, not only of St. Paul's words in that place, but of all passages where Christ is described as a sin-offering!

But let us hear the same commentator on another passage (I mean Gal. iii. 13), where St. Paul says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." On these important words, Mr. Jowett comments thus, "It may be asked how was this effected by Christ being a curse for him? To answer this question we must distinguish between the spirit and the letter, the inward meaning and the figure of the Jewish law. The inward meaning is, that Christ's teaching, and life, and death drew men to Him ⁶ until they were taken out of themselves, and in all their thoughts and actions became one with Him." After a good deal more not so intelligible on the *inward meaning*, he concludes by saying, "To the figure must be assigned (1) the notion of a ransom; (2) as nearly connected with this, the notion of Christ being a sacrifice, by which, as the victim on the altar, God is propitiated ⁷."

⁶ How Mr. Jowett does not say; but he evidently means by example and sympathy.

⁷ Jowett, vol. i. p. 261.

Here, as elsewhere, having satisfied himself that the language is figurative, Jowett dismisses it from his consideration, and forces on the words a meaning of his own, which he calls the "inward meaning;" though what discoverable connexion there is between this meaning, and the figure used to convey it, it is difficult to guess, and he does not think it necessary to inform us. Let us try by his division of the "figure" from the "inward meaning" to explain the language of our text. Of course Christ's shedding his blood for many as a sin-offering, would be set down to the Jewish figure: while "*in general*" (that is, here as well as elsewhere) "the thing meant is, "that He was put to death by sinful men, and *raised men out of the state of sin, in this sense taking their sins upon Himself.*" With such latitude of interpretation it will not be hard to find any doctrine which suits us in any text. We can scarcely believe, indeed, that any commentator would have the hardihood to apply such a random mode of interpretation to the solemn words of our Lord in my text; and yet if it is not applicable here, it is useless elsewhere. Unless he is prepared to maintain that the words "my blood shed for many for the remission of sins," mean my blood shed that my heroic example may reform many, and raise them out of the state of sin—and that my martyrdom may "draw them to me," and stimulate them to a less sinful and more noble course!—unless he is prepared to interpret this as well all similar passages in this way, all this talk about Jewish figures is utterly idle. In truth his system

not only supposes our Lord and his Apostles to have used figures loosely and carelessly, but absolutely to have selected those least fitted to convey the inward truth of the Gospel, and the most likely to mislead their hearers.

We now proceed to enumerate a few of the leading passages in the New Testament, which echo the language of my text and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Such are our Lord's own words (in Matt. xx. 28, and the parallel passage in Mark), where He says, "The Son of man came" "to give his life a ransom for many." The "giving of a life" as a "ransom" is the very essence of expiatory sacrifice¹. Equally strong are the words of John the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world²."

Let us take another witness. The Apostle John says, "The *blood* of Jesus Christ his Son *cleanseth* us from all sin¹." Again, "He is the *propitiation* for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world²." Again, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the *propitiation* for our sins³." We need scarcely remind you that the word *ἱλασμός*, translated propitiation in both these verses, is one appropriated peculiarly to the effect of a piacular sacrifice, and is an exact parallel to the language of Hebrews⁴, where Christ's priestly office is described by the words

¹ See NOTE 23.

² John i. 29.

³ 1 John i. 7.

⁴ 1 John ii. 2.

⁵ 1 John iv. 10.

⁶ Ch. ii. 17.

ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ—"to make" propitiation, or (as the English version has it) "reconciliation for the sins of the people."

For the sake of brevity, I must pass over the numerous parallel passages in the book of Revelation ⁵, and in the Epistles of St. Peter ⁶, and hurry on to the writings of St. Paul, of which it has been so confidently asserted that in them "it is the rarity, rather than the frequency, of" sacrificial "images which is striking".

In Romans (iii. 24, 25) he says, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation* (ἱλαστήριον) through faith in *his blood*." Again in the same Epistle ⁷, "Much more then, being now *justified by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

In Galatians (i. 3, 4), "Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself *for our sins* ⁸, that he might deliver us from this present evil world."

In Ephesians (i. 7) we have this strong language, "In whom we have redemption *through his blood*, the

⁵ Rev. i. 5; v. 9; vii. 14.

⁶ 1 Pet. i. 2. 18, 19; iii. 18.

⁷ Jowett, vol. ii. p. 476.

⁸ Rom. v. 9, 10.

⁹ περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν (used here and in 1 Pet. iii. 18) and περὶ ἁμαρτίας are the phrases used by the LXX for a "*sin-offering*" (ἡνσθη), as in Lev. iv. and xvi. repeatedly.

forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Again in the same Epistle ¹, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off *are made nigh by the blood of Christ* ²." Again in the same Epistle ³, "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an *offering* and a *sacrifice* to God"—*προσφορὰν καὶ θυσίαν*—the very language of the Epistle to the Hebrews ⁴.

In Colossians i. 14, we have similar language: "In whom we have *redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins*." And again in the twentieth verse (same chapter) we have the strong expression, "Having made *peace through the blood* of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself." We have already mentioned the passage "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us ⁵." It would be easy to add to the foregoing list, which contains only those texts in which the language of expiatory sacrifice is used in the most distinct and express way. The passages which speak of Christ merely as having "died for us," or obtained reconciliation for us, we may pass over now, as they might—though doubtless with much straining—be applied to the death of a mere martyr: but such an application is altogether out of the question, where remission of sins is directly connected with the shedding of the Redeemer's blood.

It is important to observe that there are several passages, in which the same truth is taught, but with-

¹ Eph. ii. 13.

² Compare Heb. x. 19—22.

³ Ch. v. 2.

⁴ Heb. x. 12—14.

⁵ 1 Cor. v. 7.

out the use of sacrificial phraseology. As in Acts x. 43, where Peter in his address before Cornelius says, "To him give all the prophets witness, that *through his name* whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Still more remarkable are St. Paul's words in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that *through this man* (διὰ τούτου) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and *by him* (ἐν τούτῳ) all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses⁶."

Now these are instances of texts which contain a full though brief proclamation of the Gospel message; and in which there is no direct allusion to sacrifice. There is no pretext therefore for expounding them as Jewish figures, borrowed from their ritual, and applied loosely to the sufferings of Christ. Yet they contain those truths about the effects of Christ's sacrifice for which we contend, and which all this talk about Jewish figures was intended to get rid of. In both cases remission of sins, extending to all those sins which the law of Moses could not reach, is the blessing distinctly held out to believers ("whosoever believeth"); and this remission is connected with Christ as its efficient cause and source; as the expressions "*through his name*," "*through this man*," "*in him*," very plainly denote. In truth the mere outward facts of suffering and death, which are supposed to suggest the use of sacrificial figures, are rarely given any prominence at all. In nearly all the texts we have re-

⁶ Acts xiii. 38, 39.

viewed, they are entirely subordinated to the power of procuring remission—the healing virtue that flowed from them. If we have mention of Christ's blood as "shed," it is added, "for the remission of sins." If we are told to "behold the Lamb of God," we are informed why He is so styled, because He "taketh away the sin of the world." If his "blood" is mentioned by St. John, it is because it "cleanseth from all sin." And so on through the whole series of texts, in which we are not left to conjecture the object and meaning of the sacrificial language applied to Christ, but *are directed* almost uniformly to the *propitiatory efficacy of his work as that which justifies the use of such language*, as that on which its whole significancy depends.

It may appear to some, that time has been spent unnecessarily in proving a point, which seems plain enough to those who read the Scriptures without any preconceived theories to support. But the currency recently given to the opinions against which I have been contending by the talents and popularity of those who advocate them, seems to demand a minuter investigation than might otherwise be needful. I cannot, therefore, leave this part of our subject, without drawing your attention to a passage in Professor Jowett's commentary, wherein he states his theory as to the origin and meaning of the sacrificial figures in the New Testament. In Romans xii. 1, the expression "present our bodies a living sacrifice'," draws forth

' On the meaning and origin of the sacrificial language applied to believers in the New Testament, see Appendix to this Lecture.

the following comment. "The thought (he says) naturally suggests itself in what way the symbols of the Mosaic law were appropriated to the truths of the Gospel." To this very important question, after some discursive remarks, he gives the following answer. He says, "The parallel of Philo, however, throws light on the question we have been considering, because it shows how readily the human mind could find in the law that which in reality it brought to the law. New truths were to be taught; new thoughts were to be given; and they must be given through something. The revelation of the Gospel was not a mere blaze of light; it contained objects to be distinguished, new relations between God and man to be explained, a scheme of Providence to be set forth. Some tongue of men or angels must be the medium of communion between heaven and earth. Accordingly the sacred things of the Israelites became by a sort of *natural* process the figures of the true: the Old Testament was the mystery of the New; the New the revelation of the Old. It was no arbitrary or technical rule by which they were connected; out of the fullness of the heart the mouth spoke*."

In plain English this means that the Apostles clothed the Gospel in Jewish imagery not because there was any real and deep analogy between the types so used, and the things they were employed to represent, still less because in virtue of a Divine pre-

* Jowett, vol. ii. p. 298.

arrangement the legal ceremonies were shaped so as to be the "shadow of good things to come:" but merely because the teachers of a new religion could not avoid using some imagery, and so they derived it from those ceremonies with which they were familiar, quite irrespective of any natural fitness it might possess for the purpose, or rather (if we may judge from the contrast between what he calls the "letter and the spirit"—the "Jewish figure," and the "inward meaning" in such cases) despite of its utter unfitness for the part assigned it. Jowett plainly feels that the phenomenon he is called on to account for is—not the Apostles using Jewish figures (which would be natural enough), but their using figures so unfit to convey the meaning he attributes to them; nay, so likely to convey an opposite meaning. How unfit he considers sacrifice to be the type of Christ's work, appears from what he says elsewhere, that "heathen and Jewish sacrifices rather show us what "the sacrifice of Christ was not than what it was". How then was it a "natural process" to use them as types, when they were so unlike that which they were forced to typify: and why did our Lord and his Apostles use figures to explain His work, which must, on such a supposition, have served to obscure it? This certainly requires explanation, and I leave you to judge whether Jowett's theory explains it. But it would seem that the foregoing statement does not go far enough to satisfy its author. The Apostles' use

^o Jowett, vol. ii. p. 479.

of imagery might still rest on too rational a basis. He therefore winds up his note with the following comments. "Yet it must be remarked also, that the application of the ceremonies of the law to the thoughts of the Gospel, is not so much an application of what men saw around them—the practice of Judaism at that day,—as of the *words* of Scripture."

* * * * *

"The *words* rather than the ceremonies of the law were the links which connected the Old and New Testament; and *the more entirely the minds of men became possessed with the new truth, the slenderer was the thread of association by which they were enabled to connect them* ¹."

What can this mean, but that there was no real analogy between the Law and the Gospel, and that the similarity found by the Apostles was based on fanciful resemblances, or even *slender* associations of *words*, irrespective of their meaning? What Professor Jowett's notion of the inspiration of the Apostles may be, it is not easy to discover: but he seems to place them far below the average of mankind in the propriety of their diction; for his theory would lead us to suppose, that the last thing which might guide us to their "inward meaning" would be the words and figures they employed. On such a theory, indeed, I could not defend the interpretation I have given of my text, or any other; for I have all along assumed that our Lord's words were fitted to convey his meaning; and

¹ Jowett, vol. ii. p. 299.

that by analyzing them, we might discover the truths He meant to teach. But on Jowett's theory, the sacrificial language in which our Lord clothed his thoughts, may have been connected with them only by some "*slender thread*" of verbal "*association* ²."

The method of objection adopted by Mr. Jowett in the foregoing extracts, tacitly admits the vicarious and piacular character usually ascribed to Jewish sacrifice; but denies the transference of these characteristics to Christ, and explains away, as figurative, the language that seems to teach such a transference. But *we have now to consider another and opposite mode of objecting*, which begins with a denial of the expiatory and vicarious character of Jewish sacrifice; and, therefore, finds no difficulty in reconciling the sacrificial language applied to Christ, with a virtual denial of his Atonement. For, of course, such language cannot be supposed to ascribe qualities to Christ's work, which did not in some degree belong to those sacrifices, from which that language was derived ³.

This latter method of attempting to expunge the doctrine of the Atonement from Scripture has received a great impulse recently from the writings of Mr. Maurice, who exercises a great influence over

² On this whole question of the meaning of figurative language, see Appendix to Lecture IV.

³ We have already seen that the New Testament asserts explicitly all that we infer from the use of sacrificial language; and this will be always an insuperable difficulty to both sets of objectors.

many in England, and is able thereby to give considerable currency to any opinions he may adopt. His teaching on atonement and sacrifice, though not original, is peculiarly insidious, as there is little to put his readers on their guard, and awaken their attention to the novelty of his opinions. He uses all the phraseology of orthodoxy, and makes no attempt to explain away the sacrificial language of the New Testament into mere figure; on the contrary, he declares that these terms must have their literal sense, and "that any other view of the case is incredible⁴." Still he uproots the Christian doctrine of the Atonement more completely than Mr. Jowett himself, though his statements are less startling—less likely to awaken hostility. He treats sacrificial terms much as he would have us believe that St. Paul dealt with the word *propitiation* (ἱλαστήριον). For having first asserted that the Apostle must have used the word in "the sense which we should gather "from all the history of the heathen world that it "must have had," he proceeds to say, that "the "Apostle vindicates the word to a Christian use, "showing that *for that use its heathen signification* " *must be, not modified, but inverted*⁵."

What he here attributes to St. Paul, is what he really does himself with great dexterity throughout his entire book. He uses all the language of sacrifice, declares that he is using it according to its proper meaning; while he is really not only "modi-

⁴ Maurice on the Doctrine of Sacrifice, p. 154.

⁵ Sermon X. p. 154.

fyng," but "inverting" the signification which such language has always borne, and still usually bears, among ourselves.

But in order to understand the antagonism between the teaching of Maurice's school, and that which has received the stamp of almost general consent, let me state as briefly as possible, without entering into details, the lessons which all propitiatory sacrifice, whether Jewish or heathen, seems very plainly to teach. We shall restrict ourselves to points of vital importance, which have been generally admitted; and the denial of which will at once show the extent to which Maurice and his school have departed from received opinions.

1. The first point we may notice as implied in the very notion of a propitiatory sacrifice, is *the belief in some objective obstacle to forgiveness*—some barrier between the sinner and his God—which, while it remained, prevented his reconciliation; and which his own repentance and amendment were unable to remove, even supposing that such repentance and amendment were possible. That this is really implied in the offering of propitiatory sacrifice at all, seems plain enough; but time will not now permit us to take such a review of ancient sacrifice as would exhibit the full strength of the inference⁶. Its truth, however, receives a striking corroboration from the fact, that those who deny the existence of any such obstacle to forgiveness, have invariably rejected all

⁶ See APPENDIX to this Lecture.

notions of propitiation from their creed, and dispensed with the practice of sacrifice. Thus among heathens, the great exception to the practice of sacrifice is in the system of Buddhism; which, however, does not destroy the unanimity of the testimony of the ancient religions, as it was itself a *comparatively* modern faith which rose up within the bosom of a system encumbered by the number of its sacrifices. Along with sacrifice, Buddhism rejected the notion which lies at the root of it, namely, that past sin presented any objective obstacle to the sinner's return to God. It was essentially a system which ignored the sinfulness of man and its consequences; and, therefore, consistently discarded sacrifice as superfluous and cruel⁷.

Among professing Christians we see a similar result appearing in the creed of the Socinians. You all know how, along with their rejection of the Christian Atonement, they have been led to maintain the still unimpaired strength and dignity of human nature. These facts strongly confirm our first conclusion, which we may express in the well-known words of Butler: "By the general prevalence of propitiatory sacrifices over the heathen world, this notion of repentance alone being sufficient *to expiate guilt*⁸, appears to be contrary to the general sense of mankind¹."

⁷ See NOTE 24.

⁸ Rather to *dispense with expiation*: this latter is Maurice's notion.

¹ Butler's Analogy, Part II. chap. 5.

2. The second lesson that I would point out as implied in the use of propitiatory sacrifice, is *the belief in the possibility of removing the obstacle to forgiveness*—of surmounting the barrier which prevents the reconciliation of man and God—*by means of sacrifice*. The rituals of Jew and heathen alike attest the belief, that it was permitted to man to approach God acceptably by the offering of something external to himself; and thereby to remove the obstacle which prevented his acceptance, and change the relation between himself and his God. No doubt, among heathen nations, this idea often degenerated into a belief that they might bribe God by gifts, and work upon Him as they would upon a human adversary. Yet *even this was rather a rude attempt to theorize on the reason of the efficacy of sacrifice, than any exception to the general agreement as to the belief in that efficacy*.

3. If we add, as a third point, the idea which seems to have been widely prevalent—if not universal—that *the life of the sacrificial victim was a substitute for the forfeit life of the offerer*; and that in some mysterious way the sin and its punishment passed from the offerer to the offering: we have, perhaps, enumerated the most important points which entered into the general belief about sacrifice. No doubt there may have been little agreement of opinion as to *why* or *how* such a vicarious punishment procured the immunity of the transgressor; but the general voice of antiquity, and the ceremonial of laying hands on the piacular victim, all attest the

“vicarious import²” of the rite. We may observe further, that this agreement is the more remarkable, the more such a transference is opposed to our common notions of justice³,—the more unlike it is to the dealings of men towards their fellow-sinners, and the arrangements of civil society,—and the more difficult it may be to reduce it to the order of our common experience. Such a belief, held side by side with notions which would neither agree with it, nor explain it, seems to point to some higher truth derived from express revelation, or the more mysterious religious instincts of our nature.

Now, directly antagonistic to all these lessons is the teaching of Mr. Maurice and his school. He distinctly denies the existence of any objective barrier raised by sin against man’s return to his God; and along with this he rejects the notion of any propitiatory efficacy in Christ’s work. This latter point he does not indeed state in so many words, for he applies the epithet propitiatory (as well as every other in common use among us) to Christ’s sacrifice. But his teaching is completely at variance with that which this language is usually employed to denote.

If you examine his book on the Doctrine of Sacrifice,” and his other writings on the same subject⁴, you will find that he continually puts forward two points as those most requisite to be dwelt upon at the present day, and insists on them with the air of an

² See Magee, 38th note.

³ See NOTE 25.

⁴ Especially his Theological Essays; Essay VII. on the Atonement.

original discoverer. The first of these is, that the incarnation and death of Christ originated in the Father's will and love, and were not (according to what he calls the "*heathen notion*") a mode of changing the Father's will. It is hard at first to see the necessity for insisting so warmly on this, for it would be difficult to find any respectable writer on the Atonement who taught otherwise—or was not as ready as he is to echo the words of Scripture—that it was "God" who "so loved the world that *he gave* his only begotten Son⁵;" that it was God who "*sent his Son* to be the propitiation for our sins⁶;" and that "*we love him because he first loved us*⁷." We may say in the words of Magee, "The sacrifice of Christ was never deemed by any who did not wish to calumniate the doctrine of atonement, to have *made* God placable; but merely viewed as the *means* appointed by Divine wisdom, through which to bestow forgiveness: and agreeably to this, do we not find this sacrifice every where spoken of as *ordained by God Himself*⁸?"

Another point insisted on by Maurice is, that God does not "delight" in suffering, or take pleasure in the death of Christ⁹. But, surely, if others dwell less on this—and assert it less warmly—it is only because they do not dream of it being questioned, or think it necessary to prove what seems almost self-evident.

⁵ John iii. 16.

⁶ 1 John iv. 10.

⁷ 1 John iv. 19.

⁸ Magee, Discourse I. p. 14.

⁹ Maurice, Essay VII. p. 140.

But the real reason for his dwelling so much on these points, appears to be his anxiety to get rid of the notion of propitiation, under any fair explanation of the term. It seems to be his purpose all along to show, that as Christ's death was appointed by the Father, it cannot really reconcile *Him to us*, or change the relation in which *we stand to Him*, but merely *manifests* the relation in which men always stood to Him. Christ's sacrifice he would have us to believe to be the proof, not the cause, of reconciliation; *to be a propitiation only because it showed God to be propitious, not because it in any sense made Him so.* This idea he opposes to what he calls repeatedly the "heathen notion;" the idea that we can alter God's mind by gifts, and bribe Him into clemency. But let me use his own words to express his opinions. He says, "God presents his only begotten Son to "both" (*i. e.* Jew and Gentile) "as the true image "of Himself, as the perfect righteousness which the "law enjoins; He gives Him up for all, as the *assurance that there is a bond between Him and his "creatures, which no rebellion of theirs, which no "law of his could set aside* ¹."

Again, he thus states his own view, and that with which he wishes to contrast it: "It is this idea of "sacrifice, not as first rising from man to God, but as "coming down from God upon man,—as exhibited in "his acts, as expressing and accomplishing his will,— "which I have been tracing through the histories of

¹ Doctrine of Sacrifice, Sermon XIII. p. 209.

“sacrifice which the Bible records, beginning from that of Abel; and which I have contrasted with the *“proud sacrifice, whereby man seeks to escape from the punishment of the sin he has committed, and to convert God to his own evil mind”*.²”

The same mode of speaking pervades the whole book. Two opposite and extreme views of sacrifice are set before the reader. The one is rejected rightly enough; and then it is assumed that there is no alternative after its rejection, but to adopt the other extreme view held by the writer himself. The fallacy lies in this: that the view generally held by divines of our Church is either wholly unnoticed, or confounded with that “heathen notion,” which is indeed a gross caricature of it. This course derives any plausibility it may have from the necessary imperfection of language in explaining such matters. We are obliged to describe the objective effects of sin (as the Bible does), by saying that God is *angry* or *unwilling to hear*. And we are obliged similarly to speak of the Atonement as causing God to lay aside his anger, and become propitious to his penitent creatures. Such anthropomorphic language may tend in some to foster the notion that God is altogether such a one as themselves, and so lead them into that “heathen” conception of sacrifice, as bribing God by gifts, and “seeking to convert Him to our own evil mind.” In such a shape it is truly opposed to the notion of a sacrifice devised and ordained by God Himself.

² Doctrine of Sacrifice, Sermon XVII. p. 280.

But setting aside such gross and carnal conceptions of God's nature (which we may hope are not very common in a Christian country), is there not another sense in which God lays aside his anger, and is propitiated by atonement? *Does not such language fairly, though inadequately, express the truth implied in every sacrifice, and attested by the voice of all antiquity—a truth which Maurice as flatly denies as the Buddhist, or the Socinian—namely, that besides that subjective obstacle which sin presents to the reconciliation of the sinner to God, there are antecedent and objective barriers in the nature of the Divine government which prevent any repentance or amendment, in and by itself, being sufficient to restore the normal relation of man and God?* This obstacle is only removed by Him who has “made peace through the blood of his cross¹”; and the sacrifices of man in every age have borne witness to the insufficiency of any mere subjective religion, and to the possibility of supplying its deficiency from some external source. This is the truth which lies at the root of all sacrifices; this is the truth which the great series of Christian teachers have ever inculcated, however various their modes of expression; this is the truth which Maurice and his school utterly ignore; and hence the Atonement is, *as he describes it*, merely an assurance of the fatherly love of God, which, like all other proofs, can have no effects on us, except those which are produced through the medium of the intellect and affections.

¹ Col. i. 20.

The work of Christ is thus stripped of all its higher and more mysterious attributes—of all that is ordinarily meant by calling it an atonement for the sin of man.

But all such opinions would be destitute of any plausible foundation, were it not that they are held in connexion with Bähr's theory of the symbolical meaning of sacrifice. The time at our disposal in these Lectures will not admit of a critical examination of that ingenious writer's views. For the present I must be content with indicating the point from which the supporters of the old view of sacrifice and the followers of Bähr diverge. *The great point in his system is the denial of any reference at all in sacrifice to punishment.* Thus, the death of the victim is not supposed to represent, or stand in place of, that which the sin of the offerer deserved, according to the common view; nor is it the essential, but only a subordinate part of the sacrifice. *The important thing is the offering of the blood to God, which symbolizes the self-surrender of the worshipper to his service.* The death is only important as the means of procuring the blood, the emblem of life, to offer. The only symbolic meaning assigned to the death is the rather unsatisfactory one of denoting the mortification or extinction of the carnal nature of the offerer. To us, at this distance of time, such a system, aided by the ingenuity which has been brought to its support, may be made to appear plausible; but it rests on no sufficient grounds, and it would require strong proof to upset the concurrent testimony of

Jewish rabbis and Christian teachers, which Bähr himself confesses to be in favour of the more usual explanation ⁴. If the death of the victim was not a vicarious punishment ⁵, but only bore an abstruse reference (as he supposes) to man's inward struggle with his own carnal nature, sacrifice could not have held its ground so long, and so universally. Men would have devised some less cruel and less costly mode of symbolizing their devotion of themselves to God's service. They would, doubtless, have either abandoned sacrifice altogether (like the Buddhist), or would have substituted the waxen image, or the offering of fruits, for the animal victim ⁶. To those who witnessed sacrifice, *its predominating suggestion* must have been *death*. This must have ever seemed the principal and essential, not a subordinate part of the sacrifice. It could never have taken the secondary place in the actual ceremony which, on Bähr's theory, it takes in the symbolical teaching of the rite. It was because its keynote was punishment—because a penal and vicarious death preceded the attempt to approach the Deity acceptably, or offer the surrender of self to his service, that it struck an answering chord in every human heart, and maintained its place in the religion of almost every tribe on the face of the globe, and through every phase of civili-

⁴ See Bähr, "Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus," vol. ii. p. 277. Heidelberg, 1839.

⁵ On the use of the words *punishment* and *penal*, as applied to sacrifice, see Lecture VI.

⁶ See NOTE 26.

zation, from the barbarous rites of the wandering Scythian to the refined heathenism of Greece and Rome⁷.

However strange it may appear, however difficult to explain, *human nature in every age* has craved for expiation of sin as a preliminary to its pardon, and *has sought not merely forgiveness, but forgiveness through atonement*. That this want existed in the human heart, and in sacrifice found its natural satisfaction, is the one lesson which we can read in the history of all religions, true and false alike,—a lesson which the perverse speculations of a few ingenious critics in the nineteenth century cannot erase from the records of mankind.

To conclude, then, our brief review of Maurice's system. *He follows Bähr in teaching that sacrifice is the mere outward symbol of the offerer's obedience, not any thing required to make his repentance and obedience acceptable to an offended God*. He does not hesitate, consequently, to use the words sacrifice and obedience as synonymous⁸, and this furnishes one out of many instances in which he forces words from their established use to make them convey ideas the very opposite of those which they were originally meant to express. And this confusion of terms serves an important end in his book: for it enables him to review the history of sacrifice from Abel downwards,

⁷ On this subject—the rival views of sacrificial symbolism—see Appendix to this Lecture.

⁸ See *Doctrine of Sacrifice* (p. 118 and 119) for some striking instances of this.

and show in every case the spirit of obedience which marked the true worshipper; and this is assumed to be identical with the feeling which prompted sacrifice, and to account sufficiently for the adoption of that rite without introducing the idea of expiation at all. Thus he gives a history of the feelings of the worshippers in every age, according to his own reading of them, without giving any sufficient reason why they should all have manifested these feelings as they did, or any satisfactory explanation of their particular mode of worship by animal sacrifice. But *we do not want to hear* that God's saints in every age were obedient, and carried that spirit to their sacrificial offerings. *We want to know what they meant by that particular rite of sacrifice, and what efficacy they assigned to it.* Their obedience and their sacrifices were not the same thing, nor does one account for the other. To assume this is only to evade the question we want to have answered—to escape in a mist of words from the universal testimony of antiquity; that something more than his own repentance and amendment are requisite that man may be reconciled to God—that he may stand again in the position which he held before sin entered into the world.

APPENDIX TO LECTURE III.

DISSERTATION ON THE SYMBOLISM OF SACRIFICE.

THE use of the Mosaic rites as *symbols*, must be carefully distinguished from their prophetic purpose as *types*. The nature of this distinction is well explained in the following passages from Mr. Litton's Bampton Lectures:—

“ Every true type is necessarily a symbol, that is, it embodies
“ and represents the ideas which find their fulfilment in the anti-
“ type; but every symbol is not necessarily a type: a symbol may
“ terminate in itself, and point to nothing future; it may even
“ refer to something past. The difference between the two will
“ become evident, if we consider that the learned researches of
“ modern times have made it more than probable that the religions
“ of antiquity were all symbolical in character, or so framed as to
“ convey under sensible images the ideas on which they were
“ respectively based; but no one would think of calling the rites
“ of heathenism types: they were a species of acted hieroglyphics,
“ which reached the understanding through the senses, and here
“ their use terminated. *A type is a prophetic symbol*; and since
“ prophecy is the prerogative of Him who sees the end from the
“ beginning, a real type, implying as it does a knowledge of the
“ reality, can only proceed from God.”

* * * * *

“ Now, to the understanding of the Mosaic ritual, considered
“ as a system of symbols, it was by no means so necessary that an
“ explanation should have been added, as it was to the reading of
“ its meaning as a system of types. We must not measure the

“effect of such representations in ancient times, and among eastern nations, by our more abstract and intellectual modes of communication. To us, the language of symbolism is, except so far as nature prompts it, a strange language; to eastern antiquity nothing was more familiar.”

* * * * *

“If the foregoing observations be well grounded, we shall neither ascribe to the pious Jew a distinct recognition in his sacrifices of the atoning work of Christ, a supposition burdened with many difficulties; nor, on the other hand, a mere mechanical performance of a dumb ceremonial; but we shall suppose, that while the typical import of his ritual was, for the wisest purposes, veiled from him until He came in whom the law found its fulfilment, as a system of symbols of representation by action, as Warburton calls it, it was a vehicle of religious instruction wherever it encountered suitable dispositions of mind¹.”

The relation of type and symbol in the Jewish ritual, is thus stated by Mr. Fairbairn:—

“Viewing the institutions of the dispensation brought in by Moses as typical, we look at them in what may be called their *secondary* aspect: we consider them as *prophetic symbols of the better things to come in the Gospel*. But this evidently implies that in another, and more immediate respect, they were merely symbols; that is, outward and sensible representations of Divine truth, in connexion with an existing dispensation and a religious worship. It was only from their being this, in the one respect, that they could, in the other, be prophetic symbols, or types, of what was afterwards to appear under the Gospel; on the ground already stated, that the preparatory dispensation to which they belonged was necessarily inwrought with the same great elements of truth, which were afterwards, in another form, to pervade the Christian².”

The general lesson taught by the Mosaic ceremonies, is thus briefly pointed out by Mr. Thompson:—

“The ritual system of the Mosaic law is intended to represent,

¹ Litton's Bampton Lectures, Lecture III. p. 82—86.

² Fairbairn's Typology, vol. i. b. i. ch. ii. p. 66.

“ in visible acts and things, man’s entire dependence upon God,
 “ and God’s hatred of sin³.”

Similarly Mr. Litton says :—

“ If the principle of the Mosaic polity was to work from with-
 “ out inwards, the import of all its ordinances was, the unfitness
 “ of man in his natural state to appear before a holy God.”

* * * * *

“ The heathen religions could never be ethical, could never be
 “ training-schools of piety, because in them neither was the abso-
 “ lute holiness of God, nor the sinfulness of man, inculcated as
 “ first principles of religion. True religion, then, whether it
 “ appear clothed in the preparatory symbolism of the Law, or in
 “ its more perfect form under the Gospel, must exhibit in strong
 “ relief the truths that sin has made a separation between God
 “ and man; and that, though reconciliation is not hopeless, the
 “ means of repairing the breach must proceed not from the crea-
 “ ture, but from the Creator⁴.”

But if from the general teaching of the Mosaic cultus as a whole, we turn to the lessons taught by its principal institution, sacrifice, we enter on a topic which has given rise to much controversy of late. It would require a volume, not a short essay, to epitomize the views and arguments of Bähr and his opponents, and to unfold the subject of sacrificial symbolism with all the care which it deserves. I must, therefore, content myself with indicating to the student, as briefly as possible, the leading characteristics of the different schemes of sacrificial symbolism.

The various explanations of the symbolical meaning of sacrifice, sinking differences of detail, may be divided into two classes :
 1. Those which regard it as *the symbol of an objective propitiation* and consequent reconciliation with God ; 2. Those which view it only as *the outward expression of the feelings* of repentance and self-dedication to the service of God. To the former class belong the opinions which have been maintained by Archbishop Magee and most of the eminent writers of our Church. To the latter belong the views of Bähr and his school, which have been eagerly caught at by those who are anxious to get rid of the idea of a true atonement ; and who are consequently glad to find

³ Thompson, Lecture III. p. 64.

⁴ Litton, Lecture III. p. 88, 89.

any theory which professes to explain the meaning of sacrifice, without including the idea which they dread. In this attempt they have, no doubt, brought prominently, and deservedly, forward a symbolical lesson which had been overlooked by the advocates of objective propitiation; and have rescued some parts of the sacrificial rite from very serious misapprehension. Thus the tendency of their speculations has been to modify the older theories, and to show the significance of sacrifice as symbolizing not only the expiation of sin, but also the consequent purification and reception of the worshipper into communion with God. But to take the words of perhaps the fairest expositor of such modified views, Mr. Fairbairn says of expiatory sacrifice:—

“ It was in its own nature a symbolical transaction, embodying a threefold idea; first, that the worshipper having been guilty of sin, had forfeited his life to God; then, that the life so forfeited must be surrendered to Divine justice; and, finally, that being surrendered in the way appointed, it was given back to him again by God, or he became re-established, as a justified person, in the Divine favour and fellowship³. ”

The following is a more minute account of the manner in which he considers this threefold idea to have been embodied in the ritual of sacrifice:—

“ By the offerer’s bringing his victim, and with imposition of hands confessing over it his sins, it became symbolically a personation of sin, and, hence, must forthwith bear the penalty of sin—death. When this was done, the offerer was himself free alike from sin and from its penalty. But was the transaction by which this was effected owned by God? And was the offerer again restored, as one possessed of pure and blessed life, to the favour and fellowship of God? It was to testify of these things—the most important in the whole transaction—that the sprinkling of the blood upon the altar took place. Having with his own hands executed the deserved penalty on the victim, the offerer gave the blood to the priest as God’s representative. But that blood had already paid, in death, the penalty of sin, and was no longer laden with guilt and pollution. The justice of God was (symbolically) satisfied concerning it; and by the

³ Fairbairn’s *Typology*, vol. i. b. i. ch. ii. p. 68.

“hands of his own representative, He could, with perfect consistency, receive it as a pure and spotless thing, the very image of his own holiness, upon his table or altar. In being received there, however, it still represented the blood or soul of the offerer, who thus saw himself, through the action with the blood of his victim, re-established in communion with God; and solemnly recognised as possessing life, holy and blessed, as it is in God himself. His soul had come again into peaceful and approved contact with God, and was thence admitted to participate of a Divine nature.”

To this he adds the following note:—

“This representation, which is so perfectly simple, that it cannot be regarded as having lain beyond the reach of the commonest worshipper, completely disposes of the objection urged by Sykes, Priestly, and others, that if the guilt of the offerer was laid upon the victim, men must have offered to God what was polluted. The objection was taken up, but, in its main point, rather evaded than satisfactorily answered, by Magee in his thirty-ninth note. Kurtz has come the nearest to a right explanation of this part of the sacrificial idea (*Mos Opfer*, p. 80—85), but spoils its simplicity and truthfulness by considering the altar as in a sense representative of the offerer⁶.”

This explanation, then, differs from that which has been most commonly adopted by English theologians, in so far as it proceeds on the supposition that the blood of the victim after the sacrifice was holy, and not polluted, as had been supposed. Recent English writers on the subject (as Fairbairn, Thompson, and Litton) generally admit the conclusiveness of Bähr's reasoning on this point. This being conceded, the symbolic lesson of the whole rite stands somewhat thus:—The imposition of hands marked out the victim (not merely as the offerer's own property, as Bähr supposes, but) as his representative before God in the work of reconciliation. Throughout the victim carried symbolically not merely the sins, but the whole personality of the offerer⁷. Its death was the offerer's death: its acceptance the offerer's acceptance by God. The victim became his substitute; because it was symbolically—

⁶ Fairbairn's *Typology*, vol. ii. b. iii. ch. iii. § 4, p. 206.

⁷ See Fairbairn's *Typology*, vol. ii. p. 293.

what Christ was *really*—*one with the offerer*. In his victim's death the sinner was supposed to die and expiate his sin. Then came the turning-point of the whole rite, *the offering of the purified life, represented by the blood which was sprinkled upon the altar by the priest, and accepted by God as holy* and discharged from the guilt of sin. Afterwards followed the burning of the victim on the altar: the whole, or a part, according to the particular kind of sacrifice. This part of the sacrifice was more prominent in the burnt-offering, whose name *Olah* (*ascension*) denoted the ascension of the victim in flame and smoke to heaven; whereby was symbolized the return to God, in holiness, of him who had before been alienated by sin^{*}.

In this symbolism there was one defect which the ceremony of the scape-goat seems to have been intended to remedy. The blood, as a symbol, had to bear a double burden: first, when shed, representing the life forfeited for sin; and afterwards, when sprinkled on the altar, representing the life offered to God in purity and holiness. The effects of the death of the victim might be inferred from the acceptance of the blood by God, which implied the previous removal or *covering* of the sins which had been confessed over the victim. Still there was an obscurity in this: its meaning was not as plainly expressed as was desirable in a system of symbolic representation. The ceremony of the scape-goat gave its due prominence to that part of the sacrifice which might otherwise have been overlooked or misunderstood. It supplied the connexion between the killing of the victim, and the sprinkling of the blood; and *explicitly* declared, what was otherwise only *implied*, that by the sacrificial death and blood-shedding the sins which had been confessed were borne out of sight and remembrance for ever. All theories which ignore the atoning efficacy of the victim's death, utterly fail to give any consistent explanation of this the most remarkable ceremony appended to the greatest of the Mosaic sacrifices.

The view here given may in many points be open to question or correction; but no alteration of details will make it approximate to the theory of Bähr, which is opposed to it, not merely in some points, but in its whole method of viewing the ceremony.

^{*} See Fairbairn's *Typology*, vol. ii. p. 354.

For his theory regards sacrifice as no more than the outward expression of those subjective feelings of repentance and self-devotion, which are appropriate to the worship of God. Its reference would thus not be objective at all, but *entirely subjective*. It would have nothing to do with the demands of a righteous government, with punishment or reconciliation on God's part. The only jarring chord in the Divine government is supposed to be man himself; and the instant that is tuned, all is harmony again. It is not acknowledged that there is any obstacle to man's reception, if he will but return to his heavenly Father and say, "I have sinned;" and of this return sacrifice is the expression and seal. There seems little reason to object to the several meanings assigned by Bähr to the different parts of the rite, if we admit that its primary reference was to the feelings of the worshipper, not to his relations to an external government. The death of the victim he supposes to denote the offerer's dying to his former self, by the eradication of carnal passions: the sprinkling of the blood denoted his presenting himself to God, after the extrusion of what was evil. The burning of the victim expressed the dedication of soul and body to the service of God. Now, let it be observed that the question at issue is, not whether sacrifice may not have borne such a subjective reference; but whether this externalizing of his own feelings was the *sole object* of the worshipper in offering sacrifice, or of the law in requiring it. Was the object of sacrifice merely to exhibit a public sign and testimony of the offerer's feelings? or was it rather to acknowledge that there was a breach between him and his God, which his own penitence could not overleap; an obstacle which could only be overcome by following the Divine directions? *We maintain that it was both; but chiefly and primarily the latter.* The view of Bähr is wrong, not on account of what it teaches, but on account of what it omits. To use the words of Mr. Fairbairn, it "*is radically defective*, for it "omits all reference to sin, punishment, substitution, the prime elements in ancient sacrifice".

I have thus endeavoured rather to indicate the point of divergence of rival interpretations, than to unfold the evidence by which they may be supported. The student will find a succinct

⁹ Vol. ii. p. 291, note.

answer to Bähr's arguments against the propitiatory and vicarious view of sacrifice in Fairbairn's ¹ and Litton's ² Appendices : and he will find an earlier stage of the controversy exhibited in Archbishop Magee's answer to Taylor and Sykes ³.

Whatever view we prefer of the symbolism of ancient sacrifice, we must admit that it is extremely difficult to realize the position of the Jewish worshipper, and to affirm with certainty what were the symbolical lessons which he read in his sacrifices. *Our conclusions on these points must ever remain open to doubt and correction*, and be considered too uncertain to modify our interpretation of the language of the Apostles about the Christian Atonement. The New Testament contains within itself sufficient explanation of the language applied to Christ, to establish the doctrine of the Atonement, even if no confirmation could be found for it in the symbolism of the Mosaic worship.

Whatever, therefore, may be thought of the explanation we have adopted of the symbolic meaning of sacrifice, *the corresponding truths about the work of Christ remain unshaken*, as they are derived from explicit statements of our Lord and his Apostles. Whatever was understood by the imposition of hands, which, according to the view above given, constituted the victim the legal representative and substitute of the offerer in the whole work of reconciliation, the New Testament gives sufficient reason to assert (see Lecture V.) that there existed a *real relation* between Christ and mankind, which made Him our representative in a higher sense; and which gave rise to that mysterious reciprocation of evil and good, whereby He was "made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him ⁴." This idea of *vicariousness* (which has no place except in *objective propitiation*, and which therefore Bähr has laboured sedulously to eliminate from the teaching of sacrifice) is so distinctly recognised by our Lord ⁵ as a prime element in his own sacrifice that it cannot be banished from thence, if even we were unable to find any trace of it in the symbolic sacrifice. (See Lecture IV.) Again, the ascension of Christ into heaven is so distinctly taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews to be an objective act of his in the discharge of his

¹ Appendix B.

² Appendix D.

³ Magee on Atonement, 38th and 39th notes.

⁴ 2 Cor. v. 21.

⁵ Matt. xx. 28.

priestly office for us, corresponding to the entrance of the high priest into the Holy of Holies once a year⁶, that no explanation of the symbolic sprinkling of the blood on the altar, and burning of the victim, can reduce these acts of Christ to the dimensions of a symbol, or even example, of the surrender of the heart and affections to God. But *all these truths, as they rest on the strongest evidence of their own, reflect back discredit on Bähr's explanation of the symbolism of sacrifice*, and give authority to that view which he seeks to overthrow; as it alone recognises the same steps from alienation to the favour of God—namely, guilt, vicarious death, atonement, reconciliation. If the work of Christ is narrowed in conformity to Bähr's explanation of the sacrificial symbol, it would only surpass the legal sacrifices by being an example, as well as a symbol, of self-devotion—the embodiment, as well as the representation, of true obedience.

There are indeed important defects in the symbolic atonement, even allowing it to have had the wider meaning we ascribe to it; but they are not of a kind which hinder it from being a faithful type of the one true sacrifice. The relation between the offerer and his victim was a merely formal and legal relation. The imputation of sin, which it implied, was grounded only on the legal form⁷, not on any essential antecedent relation; and consequently it led only to an acquittal before that law, which instituted the form, and recognised the imputation. But the relation of Christ to mankind was one of the deepest kind; which, while in some aspects it amounted almost to identity, yet in others left each their distinct parts to perform. Thus, not only was an objective propitiation made, by which all men died for sin in Christ⁸, and rose again with Him to God's favour⁹,—so that mankind stood in that relation to God's wider government, in which the Jewish offerer stood to his temporal polity after the offering of the symbolic sacrifice: but a more intimate union became possible and necessary, in virtue of which the believer had to realize in his own person (subjectively) something analogous to each successive stage of his Master's career. He had himself to struggle with evil and resist temptation. He had to die to his former self and

⁶ Heb. ix. 12. 23, 24.

⁷ See Lecture V.

⁸ 2 Cor. v. 14.

⁹ Col. iii. 1. See Alford's notes on both these texts.

become a new creature. The old man was to die in him, and the new man to be raised up in him. He was to be "crucified"¹ and "buried with"² Christ, that he might also rise with Him. He had with Him in heart and mind to ascend to heaven, and live as one who had his *πολίτευμα*³ there. And it will appear, I think, from an examination of the New Testament language on the subject, *not only that Christ's life and death were used as symbols of spiritual renovation, which is most true; but that they were really the objective counterparts and causes of that renovation.* It is not that one is a mere arbitrary symbol of the other, chosen to represent it on account of some superficial resemblance; but that they are *the correlative facts which arise from the mysterious union between Christ and his people.* They are joined together, not merely as the symbol and the thing symbolized, but as cause and effect. Our Lord does not say, I live, and my life is the type of yours; but, "*because* I live, ye shall live also"⁴.

But it may be objected that, if the various stages of Christ's sacrifice were thus symbolic of a subjective change of heart and connected with it, this countenances the meaning assigned by Bähr to the symbolic sacrifice—as representing in the death of the victim the extinction of carnality, and in the subsequent parts of the sacrifice the surrender of soul and body to the service of God. And, moreover, it may be said that his theory is more in accordance with the language of St. Paul, when he speaks of believers presenting their "bodies a living *sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God"; words in which the devotion of the heart seems pointed to as the very essence of sacrifice.

Now, in answering this, it may be granted at once that all sacrifice was, to some extent, expressive of the feelings suitable to the worshipper on the occasion. Sin-offerings were especially expressive of a sense of guilt, penitence, and the desire for reformation; thank-offerings of dependence and gratitude. The question is—Was this reference their only or their chief meaning? Did they indicate only a subjective change in the worshipper, or did they point to any thing objective, and antecedent to his sincerity and repentance? Doubtless, the latter was their chief purpose, even

¹ Rom. vi. 6. Gal. ii. 20. ² Rom. vi. 4. Col. ii. 12. ³ Phil. iii. 20.

⁴ John xiv. 19.

⁵ Rom. xii. 1.

though the former was included. If there was any one point written on the Mosaic cultus, it was the necessity for objective helps to effect objective changes in the relation of the sinner to his God. In the piacular sacrifices of the law, the primary reference was not to the offerer's own penitence or sincerity, but to the demands of the theocratic government under which he lived, and which, of himself, he was unable to satisfy. But if some still hesitate, and think that the ritual of sacrifice was prescribed merely as indicative of internal devotion, we refer them to the great antitype as the key to their difficulty; and ask, whether the death of Christ was no more than an illustrious example of that self-devotion, which the legal sacrifices symbolized? Every text which asserts a real efficacy for the remission of sin in the sacrifice of Christ⁶, and so extends its influence beyond mere example or sympathy, is a testimony that the Mosaic sacrifices pointed to something above and distinct from mere penitence and self-devotion—something which the Divine government required, before such feelings could find place and acceptance. In short, as it seems plain that Christ's death and resurrection are spoken of in the New Testament as symbols and causes of a change of heart; while effects of a different kind are also ascribed to them—effects which constitute their real title to be regarded as the antitypes of the legal sacrifices: so we must admit that the Levitical sin-offering may have borne some symbolic reference to the "death unto sin, and new birth unto righteousness," while we deny that this was the primary lesson which its symbolism was intended to teach. *Its first object was to regulate the relation of the offender to an external system of government; its reference to the internal feelings suitable to such a changed relation was secondary and obscure.*

It will be seen, therefore, that we do not deny the partial truth of Bähr's explanation of sacrifice. Its error, if exalted into a theory of sacrifice, is entirely an error of defect. Hence too its plausibility; for it is possible by this theory to give a *partial* solution of all the phenomena and history of sacrifice; while its most essential characteristics—objective atonement and reconciliation—are kept out of sight. An example of this may be seen in

⁶ See Lecture I.

Mr. Maurice's book on the Doctrine of Sacrifice; which, though containing much that is true, totally fails to account for the most important phenomena of piacular sacrifice, and for the prominent place which the sacrificial institute held in the Mosaic polity. The defect of his account of sacrifice is significantly indicated by the fact, that in a good-sized volume, purporting to contain a review of the whole subject from Abel to Christ, the Levitical institute occupies only one chapter; and a few passing allusions in its concluding pages comprise all which the writer has to say on the trespass and *sin offerings, public and private*, of the Jewish nation. He devotes a chapter to proving that the Passover (which he regards as the link between the Patriarchal and Levitical sacrifices) was only eucharistic and commemorative: why does he not discuss those sacrifices which dealt specially with sin and forgiveness? It is to them that the offering of Christ is most frequently compared in the New Testament.

On the principles above laid down, we shall have no difficulty in explaining the *sacrificial language applied to believers* in the New Testament. The usual, and perhaps sufficient, explanation of such language⁷ is, that the sacrifices spoken of are eucharistic offerings, there being no allusion at all to expiation, but only to gratitude and thanksgiving. There is but one piacular sacrifice for the Christian, and that has been offered "once for all." Eucharistic sacrifices are the only kind which it is possible for him to offer now, and even these have undergone a change in conformity to the spirit of the new dispensation. The *λογικὴ λατρεία* of Christianity requires the offering of the affections instead of the ritual sacrifice. Such are the *thank-offerings* demanded from the Christian. St. Paul calls on believers moved "by the mercies of God to present their bodies a living sacrifice*." He calls the offerings of the Philippians for his support "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God⁸," as being, no doubt, their thank-offering for the Gospel which they had received from the Apostle's lips. The Hebrews are exhorted to offer sacrifices in two ways, by "praise to God," and acts of kindness to man¹. Such, doubtless, are also the "spiritual sacrifices" spoken of by St.

⁷ As in Hinds's Three Temples, chap. vi.

⁸ Phil. iv. 18.

⁸ Rom. xii. 1.

¹ Heb. xiii. 15, 16.

Peter². All these acts of piety and goodness are intended to occupy the same place in the service (*θρησκεία*) of the Christian, as his thank-offerings in that of the Jewish worshipper.

But such language receives additional significance, if we admit that every sacrifice (even the sin-offering), besides teaching expiation, was meant also to express the self-devotion of the worshipper. If this be so, outward acts of piety and charity express the same feelings among Christians, which all the Jewish sacrifices in some measure expressed.

In short, although it appears to have been the primary object of the sin and trespass offerings to symbolize an objective propitiation; and of the thank-offering, and other peace-offerings, to express gratitude and devotion: still there seems to be every reason to suppose that each included, as a secondary lesson, that which belonged specially to the other. All the Jewish sacrifices were at once piacular and eucharistic³. The difference depended on this—whether the leading object of the worshipper was expiation or thanksgiving.

² 1 Pet. ii. 5.

³ See Fairbairn's *Typology*, vol. ii. p. 358 and 334. See also Litton's *Lectures*, III. p. 98.

LECTURE IV.

REDEMPTION AND SATISFACTION.

MATTHEW XX. 28.

“The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

HITHERTO we have been occupied almost exclusively with the sacrificial language applied in the New Testament to the work of Christ. But there is language of another kind used in Scripture, which forms an important element in modern statements of the Atonement. The words *redemption* and *satisfaction* may be regarded as embodying another class of Scriptural phrases, which all confess to be figurative; and without an accurate examination of their meaning, we shall not be prepared to deal with many questions which obscure the subject of atonement. The word *redemption*, as the social customs from which the figure was originally drawn have no existence among us, is now appropriated almost exclusively to theology; and we speak of Christ as our *Redeemer*, and his work as our *redemption*, with scarcely any recollection of the primary meaning of these words. *Satisfaction*,

though it is not, like redemption, a Scriptural term, is used to express Christ's work in its relation to the Divine law, whose requirements He *satisfied*; but generally with a special reference to its demands regarded under the image of a *debt*, and his work as the payment of that debt. On these two ideas of *redemption* and *satisfaction*, far more than on that of *sacrifice*, are based most of the formal statements of the Atonement, whether in scholastic or popular theology. It is of the utmost importance therefore to ascertain exactly the Scriptural grounds for these ideas, and how far they are faithfully represented in such dogmatic statements. This inquiry will occupy us to-day.

Our text furnishes, within a short compass, an example of the manner in which these ideas are expressed in the New Testament, and what is of no less importance, of the manner in which they are combined. For it seems that the defect of many modern systems may be traced to their overlooking the fact—that the ideas of redemption and payment, as applied to Christ's work, do not occur separately, but in combination with one another, and both frequently combined with the idea of sacrifice. Now, as both forms of expression are confessedly figurative, it will be a safeguard against misinterpreting the figures to observe this combination. Every figure admits of being expanded into a parable; and to a certain extent the use of a figure implies the propriety of such an expansion. The difficulty is to know exactly where to stop. For, though we may fill up the out-

line given by the figure with details really implied in it, and which have their counterparts in the thing figured; there is also the danger of putting in details which belong to the type, but yet have nothing to correspond in that to which we are applying them. It rarely happens that the analogy between type and antitype—or between the figure and the thing figured—is so perfect as to obviate this danger. A combination of figures with one another, or with some more perfect type, will often show us on what side we may expand a figure, and where we may look for its defects; as we cannot press one figure so far as to contradict any essential part of another thus combined with it. But to take an example from our subject. Redemption, in its primary meaning, implies the purchase of the freedom of a slave or captive; and, therefore, to any one familiar with the circumstances attending such a purchase, many things would be suggested by the word, which he might consider essential to the idea of redemption. He would probably think of a slave to be redeemed; of a slave-owner or oppressor from whom he was to be purchased; of money or money's worth which constituted the ransom; of a kind friend who came forward to pay this ransom; and possibly of other persons and details, which, to one familiar with the practice, might appear to be necessary accessories. When such a person therefore heard Christ's work described as a redemption, all the particulars I have mentioned, and probably many more, would group themselves in his mind into a sort of story or parable, for every detail of which he would

expect to find a counterpart in the mission of Christ. This, we shall find, was the way in which the oldest theory of the Atonement was formed; and its error we shall be able to trace to the fact—that details were introduced into the figure, which had no exact counterparts in the work of Christ. But these, and many other errors, might have been avoided by observing not only the figures used in Scripture, but the manner in which they were used, and especially their combination with one another.

In our Lord's words, when He says that He came "to give his life a ransom for many," the idea of money payment is introduced only in the word ransom (λύτρον), which implies also the notion of redemption (λύτρωσις), the word ransom meaning specially the price paid for redemption. But these ideas are modified by their combination with sacrifice; the ransom being specified not as money or money's worth, but a *life*: thus banishing the idea of strict commercial equivalence from the thing figured, and forcing us to limit the application of the figure implied in redemption to such circumstances as will agree with those of sacrifice. The idea of barter or payment is certainly implied in the primary meaning of λύτρον; but it is a very different kind of payment from that usually implied in the satisfaction of a debt. Λύτρον is not the money by which a man's debt is paid, but that by which he himself is purchased, and his freedom secured. This is by no means the same idea as paying a man's debts for him. Yet Christ's work is never called a payment in Scripture, except in the

sense implied in the word ransom. Sins indeed are called *debts*, and sinners *debtors*; and this figure is the groundwork of two of our Lord's parables—the *Two Debtors*, and the *Unmerciful Servant*. But in these parables there is no mention of any thing corresponding to Christ's mediation. This is indeed no proof that the mode of speaking of Christ, as having paid our debts for us, may not be correct and proper; for these parables must be regarded (like that of the *Prodigal Son*), not as giving the whole history of the relation of God and man, inclusive of the mediation of Christ (of which they may make no mention); but as describing the dealings of God with individual souls, the work of Christ being presupposed. If this be so (and it is hard otherwise to account for the absence of any mention of the Mediator), these parables describe God as He is to us now—a reconciled Father in Christ Jesus,—not as He would have been if Christ had not died.

I mention these parables, then, only to show that they cannot be brought forward to prove that Christ's paying the debts of men is a Scriptural figure. The notion of payment made by Him only occurs where it is spoken of as a ransom; and we have no right to separate the two ideas, and build an exposition of the Atonement solely on ideas derived from the figure of payment. It may be objected that there are many passages where the simple word *buy* or *purchase* (ἀγοράζω or ἐξαγοράζω¹) is used. But then the idea

¹ In Acts xx. 28, the word περιποιήσατο also occurs—"which he hath purchased with his own blood."

is still that of redemption; as it is the purchase of men themselves, not the payment of their debts, which is spoken of. Thus in Gal. iii. 13, the E. V. very properly renders *ἐξηγόρασεν* *redeemed*², where *ἡμᾶς* is the object—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." The same idea runs through such passages as, "ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price³;" and, "denying the Lord that bought them⁴."

The idea then of money payment—of satisfaction of debt—as a figure descriptive of Christ's work, in Scriptural use merges in the figures of ransom and redemption; from which it cannot be separated without danger of error. Let us now see how the figure of redemption is limited in its Scriptural use.

I have already alluded to the common use of the word, and the train of thought which it might suggest to any ancient convert, Jew or Gentile. But, for a Jew, it contained suggestions of a peculiar kind, derived from the most familiar practices of his law. In the book of Leviticus indeed the usual idea denoted by ransom appears, when it is applied⁵ to the price to be paid to procure the freedom of an Israelite sold to a stranger, without waiting for the general manumission of the year of jubilee. In the same chapter it is applied also to the price to be paid for the restoration of his land to an Israelite, apportioned accord-

² Similarly it translates Rev. v. 9, and xiv. 4.

³ 1 Cor. vi. 20, and vii. 23. ⁴ 2 Pet. ii. 1. See NOTE 27.

⁵ Lev. xxv. 51. In E. V., "the price of his redemption;" in LXX, τὰ λύτρα.

ing to the number of years between the date of the redemption and the next jubilee⁶. But there was a peculiarly Jewish idea attached to the notion of redemption, in consequence of its being applied to the redemption of the first-born⁷; all of whom were claimed by God as his own—the first-born of cattle for his altars, the first-born of men for his priests—after their escape from the slaughter of the first-born in Egypt. The first-born of men were afterwards formally exchanged for the tribe of Levi⁸; man being given for man, and the overplus redeemed at the price of five shekels ahead. This exchange of the tribe of Levi did not, however, exempt the first-born in future from the necessity of being redeemed; and we find particular directions given on this head in Numbers xviii. 15—18; and we know, from St. Luke, that these directions were complied with in our Lord's case⁹.

Now here was a custom with which every Jew was familiar, still practised in our Lord's time, and to which the name of redemption was specially applied; and we can scarcely doubt that this, and not the release of a slave, was what the word would have suggested first to the mind of a Jew. If so, it must have somewhat modified the idea usually conveyed by the figure of redemption. It would exclude some of the actors and circumstances which belonged to the redemption of a slave, but which were inapplicable to

⁶ Lev. xxv. 24.

⁷ Exod. xiii. 13. See NOTE 28.

⁸ Numb. iii. (46—48).

⁹ Luke ii. 22.

the redemption of the first-born. Thus it was no longer the idea of rescue from a tyrant or oppressor which the word suggested; for though deliverance was still the primary idea conveyed, it was deliverance from the just claims of God, who Himself prescribed the ransom. This limitation was still more apparent, where sacrifice took the place of money as the ransom. No Jew could think for a moment of his sacrifice as offered to any one but God. Thus the whole idea of redemption would undergo an important change and limitation, as interpreted by Jewish customs, and coupled, as in our text, with sacrifice instead of money payment as the instrument of deliverance. Still more would the word ransom (λύτρον) be modified by this combination; for though it still denoted the idea of exchange—of one thing taken as an equivalent for another—which appears most prominently in purchases made with money; the possibility of reducing the transaction to the principles which regulate such exchanges among men, seems precluded by the nature of the things exchanged. It is not the money of one man discharging the debt of another; nor the labour of one performing the work due by another: but the mysterious principle of life, yielded up a voluntary sacrifice, to redeem the forfeit lives of many. The idea of vicariousness—of one thing substituted for another—appears as plainly as in the simple word ransom: but it is applied to things which are incapable of being measured by weight or number, and which set at nought all the resources of earthly valuation. What shall we set in the scale against the

needs of an immortal spirit? How shall a man "make agreement"¹ for his brother's soul? or "what shall a man give in exchange for his soul"??"

But if the ideas denoted by redemption and ransom receive an important limitation from being thus combined with sacrifice, as we generally find them in the New Testament; an important comment on the meaning of sacrifice is furnished in turn by its combination with them. I have treated the symbolic import of sacrifice as consisting mainly of a representation of the punishment due to the offender, and the substitution of the life of the victim for the forfeit life of the worshipper; who, in virtue of this substitution, was restored to that covenant relation with God which sin had interrupted. This view, which asserts the vicarious and expiatory import of sacrifice, has, of course, been attacked by all who deny the need of expiation, or the possibility of substitution. All such have adopted the theory of Bähr, who would have us believe that the death of the victim neither represented the punishment due to the offerer, nor was a substitute for it, but merely symbolized the mortification and extinction of his carnal passions. According to this theory, the sacrifice was throughout the symbol only of the worshipper's feelings—his repentance and surrender of himself to the service of God—not of any thing which was requisite to make that surrender possible and acceptable; in short, *it was the symbol only of self-dedication springing from within, not of*

¹ Ps. xlix. 7, Prayer-book version.

² Matt. xvi. 26.

deliverance coming from without—it was devotional only, not vicarious and piacular.

Now, without entering further, at present, upon the discussion of these rival views³, my text and its parallels show plainly enough which of them is supported by the language of our Lord and his Apostles. For *they* constantly couple sacrifice with ransom and redemption, as in the text. It is not merely said in one place that Christ was “*sacrificed* for us⁴,” and in another place that He “obtained eternal *redemption* for us⁵,” but that we have “*redemption through his blood*,” that we are “*redeemed with the precious blood* of Christ, as of a lamb⁶,” and, as in our text, *his life*, the life offered in sacrifice, *is the ransom*, the redemption price, *for the salvation of “many.”* Now, we may ask, could this idea of ransom be thus joined with that of sacrifice, if the import of sacrifice were not vicarious? The prominent idea in ransom is that of payment—of vicarious substitution—of one thing standing in place of another. No figure can so fully convey this idea, as one drawn from purchases with money. What a source of misconception, then, would it have been thus to yoke the idea of sacrifice to that of vicariousness, if these ideas were not harmonious, but discordant! If sacrifice pointed to no substitution—no expiation, but only to the self-surrender of the penitent worshipper; could any mode of speaking be devised more likely to mislead than calling the sacrificial offering a ransom—a λύτρον—the most potent

³ See APPENDIX to Lecture III.

⁴ 1 Cor. v. 7.

⁵ Heb. ix. 12.

⁶ Eph. i. 7.

⁷ 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

symbol of substitution and exchange? On the hypothesis of Bähr, this would be as ingenious a use of figures to hide the "*inward meaning*" intended, as to call Christ's death a sacrifice, *if*, as some assert, "*heathen and Jewish sacrifices rather show us what the sacrifice of Christ was not, than what it was*"⁸!

The preposition ἀντὶ, used in the text, gives additional force to these remarks; for though it scarcely adds any thing to the meaning of vicariousness, implied in the word ransom as I have explained it, it would be inconsistent with any other explanation of it. It shows that the figure ransom is not used merely with reference to the deliverance effected by Christ's death, but with a special reference to the substitution of one thing for another as the ground of this deliverance. The preposition ἀντὶ, denoting as it does properly exchange or substitution, isolates the idea of vicariousness from the more general notion of ransom, and applies it here to the death of Christ⁹.

It may be necessary to remark, that this conclusion as to the limitation of the meaning of ransom and redemption by their combination with sacrifice, and the light thrown by them on the symbolical import of sacrifice, does not depend on these figures being *always* combined in the New Testament. Christ's work is described separately both as a sacrifice and a redemption. But these descriptions are frequently combined; and we cannot attribute any meaning to them when used separately, which would be inconsis-

⁸ Jowett, vol. ii. p. 479.

⁹ See NOTE 29.

ent with their combination elsewhere. The result, then, of our inquiry amounts to this: that we cannot treat of Christ's work as a redemption, or satisfaction of law, such as is implied in the payment of a debt, and follow out the teaching of these figures into theories of the Atonement derived from either of them singly, or even from both of them together. For, independently of the risk of pushing any figure further than was intended, we are in these instances strictly limited in our application of them by the usage of Scripture itself. And, when thus limited, however forcibly they may exhibit some aspects of Christ's work, they furnish no sufficient materials for a complete theory of the nature of its efficacy. In fact, though these figures add to our sense of the *bondage* in which we were held, and our *liability* to the penalties of law; though they set before us vividly that *deliverance*, that *discharge* from liability which Christ has procured; they are but themselves, after all, partial aspects of the truths taught in sacrifice, and their lessons merge in the more distinct teaching of the sacrificial system. Viewed superficially, they contain the germs of a wider knowledge, as they seem to give us licence to draw indefinitely on the customs of human society, and apply the principles of earthly traffic and human law to solve the mysteries of the mediation of Christ. But a more attentive examination shows, that this is a dangerous and delusive freedom to which we would make them subservient; and that, whatever light they throw on the fortunes of man, they throw little on the principle of

the Divine dealings. They still hand us over to sacrifice as the most perfect type, from which we may learn what Christ has done for us. And in *it* we find our best teacher, and one which imposes a wholesome limit on our speculations. For, while it teaches us the alienation which sin had made between God and us, while it sets forth the possibility of reconciliation, while it typifies that mysterious offering of life given to make satisfaction for us to the Divine law, it still leaves us in mystery when we ask, "How can these things be¹?" The obscurity which enfolds the efficacy of the sacrificial type, debars us from using it to remove the similar obscurity which hangs over that far more mysterious offering to which it pointed. The fact that the Jewish sacrifices had no natural efficacy to remove sin, but owed all their virtue to Divine appointment, though they symbolized important truths, and satisfied wants which lie deep in the nature of man; this fact seems to intimate that a similar obscurity may hang over the nature of the efficacy of the great sacrifice to which they pointed; at least it debars us from using them to clear away this obscurity, if it is found to exist. Our limited knowledge, too, of ancient sacrifice is a wholesome restraint; for we scarcely know enough of it to fancy points of resemblance between type and antitype, beyond those which have been expressly stated in the New Testament. Sacrifice, therefore, has done little towards supplying theories of the Atonement, though it has ever formed

¹ John iii. 9.

the real foundation of our knowledge of that doctrine. On the other hand, redemption and satisfaction, from the vagueness of their figurative teaching, while really less capable of giving solid information, do not place so impassable a barrier to curious speculation. They admit of being expanded at pleasure; and, as the Scripture only gives them in outline, ample room is left for imagination to fill in the details. How far this has been done will be our next inquiry. We have hitherto studied these figures only as they appear in the teaching of Scripture; let us now contemplate them as they grew into theological systems, in which the colouring of philosophical speculation almost effaced the original outline, to which it was meant to give distinctness.

It is an instructive fact, that during the ages when men were most familiar with the practice of heathen sacrifice, and doubtless acquainted with the symbolical import assigned to it by those who practised it; and while the Jewish sacrificial system was still fresh in the memory or traditions of the first converts, few attempts were made to form a theory of the Atonement; nor, at length, when such theories were elaborated, did sacrifice furnish the materials. The type which God appointed for the instruction of mankind, neither awoke the passion for theory, nor satisfied it when awakened. Rather, if we may venture to conjecture, it seems to have operated as a check on curiosity. The first speculation which we find growing to the dimensions of a theory of atonement, was built altogether on the idea of redemption; and

sought to explain Christ's work on the principles recognised among men in the redemption of slaves. Some trace the origin of this theory to Irenæus², but he does not appear to be responsible for it, though expressions used by him may have helped others to develop it. We may, perhaps, consider Origen as the first to state it formally; and, though it is not always easy to distinguish between rhetorical and dogmatic statements in the writings of the Fathers, the same theory recurs from time to time in the works of writers of note from the third to the eighth centuries³, with sufficient frequency and distinctness, to show that it had acquired a strong hold over the minds of many eminent theologians.

This theory was derived from the figure of redemption, and applied to Christ's work all that was to be found in the practice of redemption among men. The idea seemed to these Fathers to imply an enemy, and a price to be paid to that enemy as a ransom for his captives⁴. Following out this idea, and seeing that Satan was the great enemy of the human race from whose thralldom Christ had delivered us, they did not shrink from saying that Christ's death was a ransom paid to the evil one; and, in order to account for his accepting a ransom which overthrew his own domi-

² See Hagenbach's *History of Doctrines* (Clark's Library), vol. i. p. 176.

³ See NOTE 30.

⁴ That this was the origin of the theory is implied in the question of Gregory Nazianzen, "*Was the ransom paid to the Father?*" "*But how could that be, for we were not held in bondage by Him?*" Orat. xlv. See Hagenbach, § 134.

nion, *they said that he was deceived, not knowing that he could not keep Christ in the grave!* How completely the notion of a ransom paid to Satan is opposed to Scripture, we have already seen; inasmuch as the only ransom there spoken of is a sacrifice offered to God; and thus the part of the figure which was most necessary to Origen's theory is not only wanting in Scripture, but actually excluded by it. Yet, overlooking this, he thus couples his theory with the words of our text. He says, "To whom did He give his life a ransom for many? Not, surely, to God! Was it not, then, to the wicked one? For he was our master (*ἐκράτει ἡμῶν*) till the ransom had been given him for us, namely, the life of Jesus; but he was therein deceived, as though he were able to have dominion over it, not perceiving that he was unable to detain it ⁵."

This monstrous and unscriptural notion of a deceit practised upon Satan, which was evidently invented to account for a ransom having been paid to him, was asserted in very offensive terms by some of the Fathers. Thus Ambrose says, "*Oportuit hanc fraudem diabolo fieri;*" and Leo the great, "*Illusa est securi hostis astutia.*" A favourite image with several of these writers was to speak of Christ's human nature as a bait for Satan, who was thus allured and caught by the Divine nature, which like a hook was concealed beneath. Rufinus says of Satan, "Rapuit in mortem

⁵ I have paraphrased the last clause, *οὐκ ᾔρῳντι ὅτι οὐ φέρεי τήν ἐπὶ τῷ κατέχειν αὐτήν βάσανον*. The precise meaning is very obscure, but the sense is evidently as I have given it.

“ corpus Jesu, non sentiens in eo *hamum divinitatis* “ *inclusum* “.”

This theory (about the falsehood of which no question will be raised at the present day) seems to throw much light on the way in which we ought to regard and discuss all theories of the Atonement. For it shows:—

1. That there could not have been any systematic theory on the subject in the primitive Church; but that while all agreed (as their works abundantly prove^o) in believing that Christ died “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God^o,” yet that they had no catholic and authoritative explanation of the principle of the Atonement. Had there been any such, Origen’s theory could not have held its ground with so many, and for so long as it did. It was not itself universally received, but it shows conclusively that no other theory was so.

2. Moreover, it shows how the human mind, when seeking to systematize its knowledge, would naturally set about framing a theory: as in this case the easiest course would be to expand some figure taken from the customs of men, and apply the principles which regulated the human transaction to the explanation of the Divine dealings. The error to which this method led in the case we are considering, shows us how suspicious we ought to be in examining all similar theories, and how carefully we ought not only to adhere to Scriptural figures, but

^o See NOTE 31.

^o See NOTE 32.

^o 1 Pet. iii. 18.

to keep them within the limits marked out by Scripture itself.

3. Finally, I would observe that in the absence of any primitive and catholic theory of atonement, we need not hesitate to canvass freely all theories on this subject as so many human inferences; which, perhaps, "may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture," but which (it is equally probable) *may be* the premature efforts of the understanding to construct theories without adequate materials.

History still further confirms the wisdom of these cautions, by showing us the origin of some of the theories now in vogue in Anselm and the Schoolmen. For the notion of a ransom paid to Satan, the Schoolmen substituted a *satisfaction* made to God in the manner of *payment of a debt*⁹. On this idea are grounded the various statements, which in some shape or other have made their way into subsequent theological systems, and held their ground even to our own times. And it is a significant fact, that many Protestant theologians owe the dogmatic form in which they state the doctrine of Atonement, and in the main their theories of its efficacy, to those writers whom they charge with corrupting the doctrines of grace, and to those times which they teach us to regard as the era of "foolish questions gendering strife," and of the darkest eclipse of evangelical truth. Surely they cannot blame us for trying to ascertain, before we accept theories, which grew to maturity at

⁹ See NOTE 33.

such a time and under such guardianship, whether they can really claim a higher parentage, and be clearly traced up to the teaching of the Apostles themselves.

In one respect the theory of the Schoolmen had a great advantage over that of Origen. It got rid of the absurdity of supposing a bargain with Satan, and his being deceived in the hopes which made him accept a ransom. Anselm very properly rejected the notion of Satan having any authority over man, which would entitle him to receive compensation for resigning it¹. His theory agreed much more closely with the words of our text by making the ransom to have been paid to God Himself². One great difficulty was thus got rid of; but others, as insuperable, emerged. If God received a ransom, it could not be as an enemy who held us in bondage; therefore, the idea of redemption, which was thought to imply this, was discarded as the basis of the new theory: and whenever the word was retained as signifying deliverance from an oppressor, sin or some other abstraction was put in as the tyrant whose presence filled up the symmetry of the figure³. On account of this difficulty (which really did not attach to the figure as

¹ How closely the terms on which Origen's theory supposes Satan to have given up his dominion, resemble those which he himself offered, and which our Lord so indignantly rejected in the third temptation! (Matt. iv. 9.) To give a ransom to Satan would recognise his authority as much as to "fall down and worship" him.

² See NOTE 34.

³ See NOTE 35.

limited by Jewish ideas, and combined with sacrifice) the idea of *satisfaction of a debt* took the place of *redemption* as the basis of the theory, though it was in reality the introduction of a new figure unknown to Scripture. But when this new theory of satisfaction came to be analyzed, it too broke down; and the history of its modifications is little else than a history of efforts to escape from the difficulties in which it involved its framers.

Thus, from viewing God as exacting payment of a debt due by man, the inquiry naturally arose, what was the debt, and what was given in discharge of it? Punishment for past transgression and obedience were due by man, and had been rendered by Christ. But the idea of a debt required that what Christ paid should be fully equal to what man owed. His sufferings must have been, if this theory were to be strictly adhered to, equal to all that mankind was obnoxious to. Accordingly some maintained that, from various causes, He had endured an amount of suffering, not only greater than any one man ever endured, but actually equal to all the pain which sinful man was to suffer throughout eternity. Hence the various efforts that have been made to pourtray Christ's sufferings in an intensity for which the Scripture narrative affords no sufficient grounds. From this difficulty arose the questions debated by Thomas Aquinas, Whether the pain of Christ in his passion was the greatest possible? whether the sufferings and obedience of Christ were equivalent to those due by men? which he decided in the affirmative, say-

ing that "the satisfaction made by Christ was not "only sufficient but superabundant'." While Duns Scotus on the other hand maintained that it was only accepted by God of his indulgence, as if it were equivalent, substituting one legal term for another—*acceptilatio*⁴ for *satisfactio*—to express its effect.

A not uncommon solution of this difficulty, by those who hold such theories now, is, that Christ's Divine nature imparted an infinite value to his sufferings, and thus made them an equivalent for those due by man. But independently of the entire absence of support for this idea in Scripture, it seems to substitute for the difficulty one at least as great. For it does not appear *how* Christ's Divinity could alter the value of his acts and sufferings as man; unless, perhaps, we adopt the ancient heresy of the Patipassions, and suppose the Divine nature to have suffered and obeyed in Christ. The modification of this argument—which, presupposing the necessity for Christ's sufferings being an equivalent, and also the infinity of the debt due by man, infers from thence the Divinity of Christ—has been at once exposed and disclaimed by Archbishop Magee in his 13th Note.

These various theories seem to be so many beacons to warn us, instead of trying to decide between them, to steer clear of them altogether. They are all based on a certain notion of satisfaction derived from the relation of debtor and creditor in earthly transactions, and from the forms of human law. As the figure on

⁴ See NOTE 36.

⁵ See NOTE 37.

which they are based is not applied by Scripture to the mediation of Christ; so the word *satisfaction*, in which they are embodied, is not a Scriptural word, but a legal term adopted by later writers to express more precisely than any Scriptural term they could find the nature of the redemptive act. The use of a definite term to express what must otherwise have been stated in the more general and figurative language of Scripture, was necessary to furnish a basis for logical systems. Unfortunately, what this phraseology gained in precision, it lost in truth. Its accuracy of meaning arose from its well-defined use in the transactions of human law. But to transfer the principles which regulated the legal relation of debtor and creditor to the mediation of Christ is a course which has no warrant in Scripture, or rather is irreconcilable with the figures there used. *These figures doubtless denote a real analogy*, but then they are somewhat vague as to the extent of that analogy⁶. *Satisfaction* remedied this vagueness, but it did so by applying to the Divine government ideas borrowed from the dealings of men, the applicability of which was altogether a gratuitous assumption.

Must we, then, repudiate the word *satisfaction*, and every statement of the Atonement in which it occurs? Far from it. Perhaps few words could be found better calculated to express the results of Christ's sufferings and obedience in removing those objective obstacles and disabilities, which were the consequence

⁶ See NOTE 38.

of man's violation of the Divine law. Christ made not only a "sufficient sacrifice and oblation," but "*satisfaction* for the sins of the whole world." He cancelled the claims of law upon us; and how can we better express this than by calling it the *satisfaction of justice*? Even taking the word in its more restricted sense, as the discharge of a debt, since, perhaps, no earthly analogy more truthfully represents sins and sinners than that of debts and debtors; so, perhaps, nothing can better figure our altered relation to God, through what Christ has done for us, than the description of his sacrifice as the satisfaction of man's debt⁷. Such a cautious use of the word as this, or such a use of it as is to be found in our Articles and Liturgy, can no more be objected to than that of any of the extra-Scriptural terms in such common use among theologians. But the use of the word is not so harmless, where it is substituted (as it was by the Schoolmen) for the more Scriptural terms sacrifice and propitiation, in order to supply the means of *theorizing about the manner in which Christ's sufferings and obedience had produced the effects* ascribed to them.

It was, as we have seen, the pre-eminent excellence of sacrificial language when applied to Christ; that, while it distinctly attached to what He had done the notion of expiation—of remission of sin—of a complete change in the relation between sinners and their God: it seemed specially to exclude that rash curiosity

⁷ See NOTE 39.

which would pry into the ultimate law of the Divine dealings; which would inquire not only what were the effects of the redemptive act, but *how* it produced those effects. The absence of any natural or reasonable connexion in sacrifice between the means adopted and the end obtained, combined with the universal acquiescence in its efficacy, notwithstanding this want of connexion, was just what fitted this language to teach the doctrine of the Atonement as an object of faith, not as a theme for philosophical speculation. As such it was first taught and long received in the primitive Church. But when dialectic subtlety forced itself into all the mysteries of religion, men were not satisfied with such an humble reception of Divine truth. They were not content with a mere examination of the *meaning of the truths revealed*, and *their relation to the religious affections*; but they would ask, like Nicodemus, "how can these things be?" And where Scripture was silent, they sought for an answer in the logical evolution of words. What *sacrifice* could not supply, *satisfaction* did. It enabled the Schoolmen to import ideas taken from the relations of debtor and creditor in human society, and out of these to form a solution of the question—not only whether Christ's death was a satisfaction of the Divine justice, but *how it was so*. Sin and punishment evidently bore some fixed relation to one another in the Divine government. Why not treat them as measurable by number, like sums of money (as the word *debt* suggested); and thus account for the whole transaction by showing that what Christ paid was exactly what

man owed? Of some of the theories, by which this was attempted, we have already spoken. We need only observe now that the idea, on which they are all alike based, does not come from Scripture. If it be allowable (and this need not be questioned) to use the word satisfaction, which is not found in Scripture, for the more Scriptural terms sacrifice and propitiation, we must use it in a sense equally restricted; and not import into it an additional idea taken from earthly relations. Yet it is exactly so much of the idea of satisfaction as remains over and above, when we deduct from it all that is implied in propitiation, which has been the basis of most theories from Thomas Aquinas down, that have been evolved from this word, or compressed into it, as modes of reconciling God's justice and love. They are not found in Scripture, but added to it. They are, one and all, not the teaching of the Spirit of truth, but ingenious and unsatisfactory speculations of man—speculations which, instead of increasing our love for, and faith in, the Saviour, have repelled many an earnest mind; by setting forth perplexing statements and unsatisfying theories as the objects of that faith and love, which can only receive its full development, when resting, undisturbed by logical subtleties, on the adorable Saviour Himself.

To sum up what I have said—*Propitiation* is a Scriptural designation of what Christ has done for us. *Satisfaction* has been used to express the same thing; but its application being more extensive, there may be ideas implied in it, which are not implied in

the Scriptural word, and which must, therefore, be separated and set aside before making it the basis of logical reasoning. *Propitiation* (ἱλασμός) *implies* the reconciliation of God and man before alienated, by means of sacrifice—in the Christian scheme, by the sufferings and obedience of Christ. Of neither the estrangement, nor the reconciliation, have we any adequate idea; though our consciousness testifies to the reality of both. *Satisfaction*, as it is frequently used, *implies* this further idea—that the cause of the estrangement and the reconciliation are alike to be sought in certain external things which can be measured and numbered—that sins and punishments (like debts and money) have not only a fixed relation to one another, but a relation measurable by arithmetic. In short, the Schoolmen, in their evolution of this part of the idea of satisfaction, entirely lost sight of sin as a state of the agent, mysterious in itself, mysterious in its consequences; and considered only sinful acts, as things which could be measured against punishment, and which would combine it (like certain chemical constituents) only in fixed weights and volumes. No greater condemnation of this mode of theorizing can be found than in the fact—that *it deals with things, not with persons*; and applies to the spiritual necessities of an immortal being, and its relations to the fountain of all holiness and love, the same formula that would solve pecuniary liabilities, and regulate the mere legal relation of creditor and debtor^a. If we are to draw a real parallel to the

^a See NOTE 40.

great problem of religion from the analogy of debts and debtors, we should ask, *not how* may a man who owes so many thousands become solvent (this can only be by the money being paid by him or for him); but *how may* one who has involved himself in debt by vicious habits, reckless expenditure, and dishonourable practices, be restored to the position from which he has fallen, not only partially (as he may by reformation), but entirely; so that in disposition, health, property and other external circumstances, whether viewed from within or from without, he should be as though his former life were no part of his history. This is a question not so easy to answer, and not reducible to arithmetic like the other. In short, whenever we want to find even a partial analogy for the great truths of redemption, we must turn our thoughts from acts to agents—from external measures of situation, like sums of money due, to character itself. When we do this, we shall find that the analogy of human relations, so far from clearing up the mysteries of the Divine government, only adds to the number of difficulties which we are unable to solve.

In conclusion, let us observe, that this method of reducing sin and punishment to measurement, and so diverting our thoughts from the agents to their acts, which has been evolved from the forensic idea of satisfaction; has been the parent of all that monstrous system so symmetrically stated by Romish authors, and confirmed by the Council of Trent, by which a man may perform works of supererogation, may *satisfy* for another's sins or for his own, or lay up in the treasury

of the Church a store of good works or penances, to be dispensed to other sinners in due time in the form of an indulgence. Now Protestant writers sometimes speak as if they considered the principle of all this to be fair and right; and that the error of it consisted solely in transferring to saints and ascetics a power of satisfaction which belongs to Christ alone[°]. But this seems to leave the root of the error still untouched. No doubt, if all that the most holy man can do be far short of his duty to God, as indeed it is, the Romish system falls to the ground. But ought we not to challenge this whole idea of satisfaction, even as applied to Christ? Is not the notion of certain things done and suffered by Christ, instead of certain other things which should have been done and suffered by us, a very imperfect, if not altogether erroneous, view of his vicariousness¹? Could such a discharge of duties and penalties heal the wounds of sin, and restore the fallen creature to communion with his Maker? Is the communication to his believing followers of that life which is in Him—of that sap which flows from the root to the branches of the true vine—of that vital influence which passes from the head to the members; to be reduced to a mere consequence of penalties undergone, and debts paid? No, these great truths, which are the very foundation of our hope and faith, transport us at once beyond the region of earthly relations to that mysterious ocean of truth, where the compass of human

[°] See NOTE 41.

¹ See Lecture V.

experience can no longer guide us safely. That "Christ died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God ²;" that He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree," so that "by his stripes we are healed ³;" that He gave "his life a ransom for many;" that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them ⁴;" that the Divine attributes of justice and love were harmonized in the work of Christ ⁵, so that God is at once "just," and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus ⁶;" all these are truths which we may entirely receive; which we may feed upon as the sustenance of our faith; and which, whenever they come in contact with ourselves, our hopes, and prospects, are fraught with consolation, peace, and joy. But when we turn from the practical bearing of these truths, and attempt to combine them into one harmonious system, which may show their connexion with one another, and their common origin in the plans of God, and the system of the universe, we are utterly baffled; and we run the risk, not only of failure and disappointment in our rash attempt, but of losing the practical use of the truths, which we have thus forced into crude and imperfect combination. We not only lose our labour in attempting a task so much beyond our strength, but we endanger our happiness, by thus converting the sustenance of faith and hope into the

² 1 Pet. iii. 18.

³ 1 Pet. ii. 24; and Isa. liii. 5.

⁴ 2 Cor. v. 19.

⁵ See Lecture VI.

⁶ Rom. iii. 26.

materials from which a foolish and presumptuous speculation may construct theories of the Divine government. As well might we sit down in the midst of nature's most glorious scene to speculate on the theory of vortices, or the cause of gravitation, as, when surrounded by the proofs of Divine beneficence and redeeming love, seek to satisfy the yearnings of a soul which craves to be redeemed, and sanctified, and saved, by the logical subtleties and elaborate contrivances of the theory of satisfaction.

The Reformers emancipated us from the dangerous notions—that one man could *satisfy* for the sins of another; and that the Pope could issue an indulgence to dispense the blessings of such satisfaction to whom he pleased; and that penal fires in purgatory could complete the work of satisfaction left unfinished in this life. Let us thank God for a Reformation which originated in a reaction against these shocking theories of satisfaction; but let us beware, lest we apply that carnal notion of satisfaction, on which purgatory and indulgences really rested, to the infinitely glorious and mysterious work of Christ. Let us beware of regarding His sufferings merely as the payment of “an eye for an eye,” or “a tooth for a tooth;” instead of the procuring of a remedy which dealt with the disease rather than the symptoms—which acted on those hidden springs of evil that have their source beyond the reach of our senses, or the penetrating search of our reason—and which in its secret nature, and unbounded efficacy, even the

“angels desire to look into’.” We must, if we would learn Christ as little children, and love Him as his earliest followers loved Him, not only apply the subtleties of the Schoolmen to a different object, but break loose from them altogether, as snares which the human understanding has woven to entrap the simplicity of our faith.

’ 1 Pet. i. 12.

APPENDIX TO LECTURE IV.

DISSERTATION ON THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE.

THERE is no more favourite method of attempting to set aside the Scriptural evidence for the Atonement, than by asserting that the sacrificial language applied to Christ is figurative. It is then assumed, as a necessary consequence, that no dogmatic conclusion can be drawn from this language; in fact, it is treated as if it were incapable of imparting any information at all.

On the other hand it has been too much the tendency of the defenders of the doctrine of the Atonement to admit tacitly that figurative language is thus unworthy of trust; and to rest their defence solely on the counter-assertion that the sacrificial language applied to Christ is not figurative at all, but literal. But such a position, though correct so far as to warrant the doctrinal conclusions which they rest upon it, is not strictly true; and furnishes grounds of objection to opponents, by failing to recognise the figurative element which enters very largely into the sacrificial language of the New Testament.

It will not, I suppose, be disputed, that when John the Baptist called Christ "the Lamb of God," he used a figure of speech—a metaphor, which could not possibly be mistaken for a literal statement, any more than when our Lord called Himself a "way," or a "door," or a "vine." The origin of all such figures is natural and obvious. The name of one thing is applied to another, not because they are in all respects alike (in which case it would be no figure), but because, though the things themselves belong to

different species, they possess certain *common generic qualities*, to which attention is drawn by giving them the same name. The very dissimilarity of the objects thus included under one name incites us to look for the points of resemblance which warrant this unexpected application of the name. Thus, if a man is called a *lion*, we never think for a moment that it is thereby meant to assert that there is no difference between him and a lion; but that (though essentially different) they possess certain qualities in common, such as strength and courage. In like manner, when Christ was called a "lamb," it was meant to institute an important comparison between Him and certain sacrificial victims—a comparison, the nature and extent of which, though afterwards more fully unfolded, were sufficiently indicated in the words that follow, "which taketh away the sin of the world."

To assert that there is nothing figurative in such language, is to assert that Christ was literally a lamb; while, to set the expression aside, as giving us no positive information, because it is a figure, would be to imply that no comparison was intended between Christ and a lamb, and no common attribute assigned to both. Both assertions seem alike opposed to our ordinary mode of treating similar expressions. We should deal with such language in the same way as we deal with similar assertions in which no theological question is involved; that is, we should search for some comparison, and endeavour to ascertain the points of resemblance and contrast in the two things compared: *e. g.*, if a certain man is called a lion, we can trace the various points of resemblance; and, leaving out of view those, in illustration of which most other animals would serve as well (for the comparison to a lion implies resemblance only in things peculiar to that animal), we at length arrive at the qualities of strength and courage, as those which are meant to be ascribed to the man who is designated a lion. The expression being figurative does not prevent its implying a very definite assertion about him to whom it is implied.

We may say the same, of course, of such expressions as, "I am the way," "I am the door," "I am the vine;" figurative expressions easily understood, and which have never given rise to any serious difficulty or misapprehension.

It is worth remarking that such figurative terms cannot be safely applied, except where the points of difference are obvious

and strongly marked, lest they should be misunderstood as asserting a complete instead of a partial similitude of the things compared. If the points of difference are obvious, the mind at once passes them by, in search of the points of resemblance indicated. This requisite seems to belong fully to the figures of the "door," the "way," and the "vine." I may add, that before it became obscured in the mists of controversy, the expression, "This is my body," did not stand in greater danger of being understood literally than any other figure; the points of contrast between Christ's body and the bread which He held in his hands, at the time being so apparent to those present, that they were as little likely to conceive Him as asserting their absolute identity as when they heard Him call Himself a "door," or a "vine." In all such cases, the obvious contrast which existed between the things compared, led the mind to search for the less obvious, but no less important points of resemblance, to which it was meant to call attention.

It may be thought, however, that such an expression as "the lamb of God" is an extreme case, as indeed it is; but that in other instances of sacrificial language applied to Christ, there is nothing figurative, as when He is called a "sin-offering" (περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν), or a "sacrifice." The truth seems to be, that there is no ambiguity whatever in such expressions; but whether they are in any degree figurative, will depend on what we mean by a *figure*.

I suppose that those who say that such language is literal (not figurative) will be among the most ready to admit, that the legal sacrifices were types of that of Christ. Now, if a *type* be, as it has been defined (and few will object to the definition), "*a prophetic symbol*," it seems to follow that the application of the name of the type to the antitype, is a figure of speech. For what is a symbol, but a partial likeness of something else, which nevertheless belongs to a totally distinct species? We never think of calling a man a symbol of a man, or a lion of a lion; but we call a lion a symbol of a courageous man. The relation of the symbol and the thing symbolized implies distinctness of species, combined with some common generic attributes. *To apply the name of a symbol to that which it represents—of a type to its antitype—is to use what is commonly called a figure of speech.* In short, the relation which exists between the Levitical ordinances and Christ

—that of type and antitype—precludes the name of any of these being applied to Him, except figuratively. Thus the Passover and the sin-offering were distinct species of sacrifice, and in several particulars essentially different. Both names are in the New Testament applied to Christ; both in some degree figuratively, and not in the full extent of their literal meaning. In fact, the only exception to the figurative character of the sacrificial language applied to Christ, is when, leaving every particular species of sacrifice and victim out of sight, He is designated a “sacrifice” or “offering”—the broadest generic terms which can be found to include the Redeemer of mankind, and the innumerable victims offered in the Levitical worship.

Yet there appears to be some ground for doubt in admitting even this exception. For, though the word *sacrifice*, if understood in as broad a sense as we understand it, is doubtless applied literally to Christ, it may be questioned whether a Jew would have attached the same meaning to it as we do; and whether, even if he were willing to believe the doctrine of the Atonement, he would not have considered it a figure of speech, the first time he heard Christ’s death called a *sacrifice*. In all probability he would have included many particulars of the ritual in his idea of a sacrifice; and so would have felt, when he first heard the word applied to Christ, that he was obliged to alter its meaning in order to make it literally applicable to this new interposition for his pardon. If this be so, the word sacrifice, when first applied to Christ, partook of the nature of a figure; but, having been so applied, its meaning became permanently altered: it became, in fact, the designation of a wider genus than before. But this widening of the application of the term, by the narrowing of its meaning—or, in logical phraseology, this increase of the *extension* of the *term sacrifice*, by the diminution of its *comprehension*—is not, be it observed, a mere arbitrary proceeding on our part, but is the necessary and legitimate consequence of its use in the Apostolic writings. Thus we may concede the *partial* truth of what Mr. Jowett says (vol. ii. p. 477), that “the death of Christ is not a sacrifice in the Levitical sense; but what we mean by the word sacrifice, is the death of Christ:” at least, we may admit that the word *sacrifice* has been extended beyond its original meaning, so as to include the death of Christ. But we are fully justified in

this use of the word, and in the meaning we attach to it, as in so doing we are only following the example and teaching of the Apostles themselves, who extended the application of the word by eliminating from the idea (*i. e.* the *comprehension*) of *sacrifice* those attributes which were local and temporary, and leaving only what were essential and permanent. *Such language has become thereby more precise* as an index of the Apostles' meaning; and not, as some would have us believe, too vague and rhetorical to convey any certain information.

The real question about all such language is, not whether it is figurative, but what is the truth it was meant to teach. According to writers like Mr. Jowett, it teaches nothing at all—at least nothing intelligible—nothing that would not be just as well, or even better understood, if sacrificial terms had never been applied to Christ.

According to the general belief of Christendom, from the time of the Apostles down to our days, such language was meant to teach, that Christ and the Jewish sacrifices (though obviously differing in themselves) had certain important attributes in common, about the nature and extent of which the inspired writers have left little room for doubt. These attributes were *expiation of sin, remission of punishment and guilt, restoration to favour and communion with God*; whatever, in short, is included under the ordinary meaning of the word *atonement*. The proper attribution of these qualities to what Christ has done and suffered for us, is the point for which *we* contend, and which Mr. Jowett and his school virtually deny. The Apostles, we believe, not only compared Christ's death to the legal sacrifices, on account of the suffering common in both cases (which would have warranted the application of the same figure, as well to the death of Stephen as to that of Christ): but they expressly stated other and more important points of resemblance, and asserted in the most explicit manner, and in reiterated statements, that a propitiatory efficacy was possessed by both in common; but that it belonged, in a higher degree, to the offering of Christ, than to its Levitical types.

Instead of arguing, therefore, that all the sacrificial expressions in the New Testament are figures (which is a mere *ignoratio elenchi*), let those who assail the received views of the Atonement

show, if they can, that the Apostles, when using such terms to describe Christ's mediation, could have meant any thing else than to assert that, *by what He did and suffered for us, He made an atonement for the sins of mankind, procured remission of sins, and gave to repentance and faith an efficacy for the salvation of believers—which, in themselves, they did not possess, and which otherwise they would not have obtained.* Let them not merely expend their labour in proving (what I for one will not deny) that Christ is only figuratively called a "lamb," or a "sin-offering," or "our passover;" but let them prove, if they can, that He does not really "take away the sin of the world," and screen believers from the punishment of God, as really and effectually as the blood of the Paschal lamb, sprinkled on the door-post, saved the houses of Israel from the visit of the destroying angel.

In fine, it must be always borne in mind, in examining Scriptural language, that a *figure* implies at once *resemblance* and *difference* between the symbol and that which it represents. So far as there is resemblance, it imparts knowledge; so far as there is difference, the knowledge imparted is defective. Care, therefore, is required to discern how far the analogy holds good, and where we must cease to pursue the comparison. Where the figure is borrowed from the ordinary relations of human society, experience and memory supply numerous details, which we are tempted to imagine must have their counterparts in the Divine things which the figure represents. In this way men are tempted to pursue such comparisons too far; and this danger is greater in interpreting the figures used in Scripture, than in ordinary literature; for some of the truths enunciated by Scripture in figurative language are probably incapable of being exhibited, in their integrity, to the human mind, as they belong to the things which eye hath not seen, nor the heart of man conceived. The aspect of such truths with which we are most concerned—their bearing on our own fortunes—is partially made known to us through the medium of figures, *i. e.* by the similar attributes of things with which we are acquainted. Such partial information, if it teach us how to feel and act towards that which we imperfectly comprehend, may be quite sufficient for our practical wants, and may, to a great extent, supply the place of a more perfect knowledge.

Thus, when God is described as our FATHER and our LORD, we

apply to his relation to ourselves the analogy of a human parent or ruler, and we are led to yield Him that respect and affection which belong to Him as such. How vast is the practical utility of such teaching! and yet how imperfect (except for practical purposes) must be the knowledge thus conveyed to us of the relation of the great Jehovah to the creatures He has made! And, be it observed, that in many cases we have no choice between such knowledge and absolute ignorance. "The invisible things of him" can only be "understood by the things that are made¹." *Only so far as his creation is filled with types of Himself, can we attain to the knowledge of God.* But there is, consequently, great danger of ascribing the imperfections of these symbols to God; and like the heathen attributing to Him the passions, and caprice, and cruelty, which belong to human parents and governors. If we could see God as He is in Himself, we should at once discern how far each figure faithfully represented Him, and where it was defective. Such is the way in which we correct the figurative language of our daily life. We can go to the original to supply the defects of the picture. But such a method of correction is out of our reach in Divine things. Our only safeguard there is the variety of such figures, which limit and correct one another (see Lecture IV.); as sketches of an object from different points of view, though each imperfect, help to prevent our forming an erroneous conception of the whole. Thus to discard every text which seems to be figurative, as incapable of giving us information, would be to cut out of the Bible all which makes it truly the book of Revelation; and to leave little but stories and maxims of common life, such as might be found in an uninspired book. While, on the other hand, to fancy that these figures give us a complete view of the truth, or to ascribe to the thing represented every quality of the symbol, is to mistake altogether the limits of human knowledge, and the nature of a Divine revelation.

But it should be observed that such Scriptural figures differ from those in ordinary use, only as being applied to objects of a higher kind²; but not at all in the way in which they convey information. *They are not figures of a different kind*, and therefore

¹ Rom. i. 20.

² See NOTE 42.

exempted from the ordinary laws of language ; *but they are applied to a different and more incomprehensible class of objects.* To the interpretation of the figurative language of Scripture, the very same rules must be applied, as to all similar modes of speech ; but more caution is requisite, as we can never repair to the object itself to supply the deficiency of the type.

I have treated the Atonement throughout my lectures, as a transaction which *in its own nature* we cannot fully comprehend ; but which, nevertheless, *in its bearing on our own fortunes, and its demands on our faith and affection,* has been sufficiently revealed, through the medium of various figures founded on the partial analogy of certain transactions familiar to mankind. The principal of these are,—

1. The description of what Christ has done for us as our *reconciliation*, or restoration to the friendship of an offended God.

2. Its being represented as a *redemption* from slavery.

3. The description of Christ's life (or blood) offered for us, under the names of *ransom* (λύτρον) or purchase-money (τιμή)—the recognised symbols of barter, or vicarious substitution.

4. Lastly, *sacrificial types and language* ; an impartial examination of which will show that they are less liable to abuse than any other figure. The resemblance between type and antitype is easily perceived, and has been accurately pointed out by the sacred writers. The points of difference also are so easily discerned, that there is little fear of mistake. Even the things which are difficult and obscure in the one, bear a close resemblance to those which are similarly obscure in the other. Then, in our day at least, there is little room for imagination to supply additional details to become materials for an excessive extension of the figure. On the whole, they exhibit an unparalleled fitness to illustrate the nature of Christ's mediation ; and if they have been perverted and explained in the most opposite ways, it is to the wayward and contentious spirit of man that this result must be attributed, and not to any defect in the symbol which Divine Wisdom appointed to represent the most momentous realities in the history of the relation between man and his God.



LECTURE V.

VICARIOUSNESS.

ROMANS v. 19.

“As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

WE have to consider to-day the principal texts which teach the vicariousness of Christ's work. And, as his vicarious functions embrace almost every thing which renders his sacrifice precious to believers, as well as every thing which has made the doctrine of the Atonement a stumbling-block to others, the subject is at once the most important, and the most difficult that has yet engaged our attention. Let us begin by considering the meaning of the term *vicariousness*, and kindred words, before we discuss the Scriptural authority by which we justify their application to the work of Christ.

1. The first and most usual meaning assigned to *vicariousness*, is that of *substitution*, which is generally regarded as synonymous with it. The two words are very freely interchanged by many writers.

The most exact instance of true substitution is to be found in all dealings of barter or purchase. Thus the idea is very prominently brought forward in the word *ransom* (λύτρον), applied by our Lord to his own death¹, which shows how largely the idea of substitution entered into his view of his own sacrifice. That the idea must be somewhat modified by being transferred from things to persons—from money and goods to living, responsible agents—seems unavoidable; but the idea is too sharp and distinct, even though conveyed in a figure, to admit of being explained away. And this leads me to observe, that substitution in its strictest form, belongs properly only to things, not to persons²; and this is so far observed, that the idea of substitution is more commonly connected with our Lord's acts than with his person. We speak of his obedience or sufferings as a substitute for those of men. In short, it is rather as the propitiatory victim than as the offerer that Christ is generally spoken of as our substitute.

2. But as a personal agent—as not only the victim, but the priest who offers sacrifice and intercedes for his people—his vicariousness receives a somewhat different explanation. He is then spoken of as the *representative* of mankind, including them all in his own person, as the Jewish high priest represented the whole people, and included in himself all the sacerdotal privileges which belonged to them as a

¹ Matt. xx. 28.

² Slaves are treated as *things* when bought and sold.

“kingdom of priests, an holy nation ³.” It is easy to see how closely this idea of representation is allied to that of substitution. In both there is the common idea expressed by vicariousness, namely, the taking the place and discharging the functions of another. The chief difference seems to consist in the more usual and proper ascription of substitution to things, and representation to persons. In both it is almost invariably implied, that the discharge of the functions by the substitute or representative, exempts that which is represented from the necessity of performing them.

3. But, besides the vicarious functions which belong to Christ as priest and sacrifice, the same idea appears in a somewhat modified and more general form under the name of *mediation*. The ground of his mediation is laid in his being the adequate representative of the two parties between whom He mediates. He is not only the representative of God with man, but of man with God. But this twofold vicariousness includes all that we have already spoken of, and much more besides. Perhaps it is for this reason—its wider meaning—that we less frequently think of looking to Christ’s mediation than to other descriptions of Him, as asserting the vicarious aspect of his work.

It is true that the terms *vicarious*, *substitute*, and *representative*, are alike unknown to Scripture: yet their general applicability to Christ is sufficiently

³ Exod. xix. 6.

warranted, when He is spoken of as a sacrificial victim, or a sacrificing Priest; and the same thing, as we have seen, is implied, but less distinctly, in his being called a Mediator. If we were right in our interpretation of the symbolic meaning of sacrifice⁴, the death of the victim represented the punishment due to the sinner, and was a substitute for it; so that the symbolic punishment expiated the real offence, and (according to the strictest meaning of substitute) exempted the offerer from the liability to suffer himself. Thus, from the substitutionary character of the sacrificial victim, we are led to expect some corresponding vicariousness in the functions of Him who was proclaimed to be "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

On the representative character of the Jewish high priest it is not necessary to dwell. He who bore on his breast the names of the twelve tribes—who offered sacrifices for the whole people—who confessed all their sins, and interceded in their behalf, was the representative of the whole nation in their intercourse with God. Moreover, he was a representative, not by appointment from man whom he represented, but from God, as the Apostle expressly tells us: "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest⁵."

The high priest was also, in some degree, the representative of God to man, and so the name of high

⁴ See APPENDIX to Lecture III.

⁵ Heb. v. 4, 5.

priest corresponds very closely to that of *Mediator*⁶. However, his prominent character was as man's representative; and, when the other half of his mediatorial office is included, he is called the "Apostle," as well as "High Priest"⁷—the Messenger of God, as well as the representative of men.

We have already spoken of the distinctness with which the term *ransom*, applied by our Lord to his own life offered in sacrifice, points to the substitutionary character of his death. But the word ransom is only a figure, and the legal sacrifices and priesthood were only types: we cannot, therefore, through them expect to arrive at the perfect idea of that to which they pointed; but yet we may feel certain that the analogy which they express is deep and important, and not lightly to be set aside, because it is conveyed in figure and type. Let us now turn to those texts which assert Christ's vicariousness more directly, and with less of figurative or typical allusion.

Some of these texts are such as might *possibly*, by great straining, be supposed only to imply a martyr's sufferings for the good of mankind; but their natural and fair meaning⁸ points to vicarious sufferings and a vicarious death. Such is the assertion of St. Peter: "Christ also hath once suffered *for sins*, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God⁹." Here

⁶ Christ is called both *ιερεὺς* and *μεσίτης* in the Epistle to the Hebrews; elsewhere only *μεσίτης*.

⁷ Heb. iii. 1.

⁸ See NOTE 43.

⁹ 1 Pet. iii. 18.

the expression "*for sins*" (περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν) is that peculiarly appropriated to a sacrificial sin-offering, in which the death of the victim was a substitute, on our theory of sacrifice, for the death of the offerer. But this idea is asserted distinctly, apart from the sacrificial allusion, in the words, "the just for the unjust." In like manner St. Paul says, "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly¹," and the words that follow "scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die," show as plainly as possible that he is thinking of a man's dying *instead of*, and *so as to save another*. In the Epistle to the Hebrews Christ is spoken of as "tasting death for every man²." How remarkable as bearing testimony to the vicarious character of Christ's death is the involuntary prophecy of Caiaphas; "Ye know "nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for "us, that one man should die for the people, and that "the whole nation perish not³." Stronger, however, than all these is the language of the famous prophecy of Isaiah, part of which St. Peter quotes and applies to Christ. It asserts the vicarious sufferings of Christ, and his representative character as bearing our sins, far more distinctly than calling Him a "sin-offering," or a "ransom for many." Hear the words of the prophet. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chas-

¹ Rom. v. 6.

² Heb. ii. 9.

³ John xi. 49, 50. The preposition used here, and in the other passages quoted, is *ὑπέρ*. See NOTE 29.

“tisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all ⁴.”

Surely such words bring into prominent relief, not only the general notion of a sin-offering, but the more precise ideas of “bearing sins” and suffering “chastisement,” as the representative of mankind, so as to release them from sin and chastisement: “By whose stripes ye were healed ⁵.”

But there are two famous texts, both in the writings of St. Paul, which place the truth of Christ’s vicariousness in the strongest light, though in language somewhat difficult and paradoxical. One is the well-known passage (2 Cor. v. 20, 21) where the Apostle thus states the ground on which rests the invitation to guilty man to be reconciled to God: “We pray you in Christ’s stead,” he says, “be ye reconciled to God. For he hath *made him to be sin for us*, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Strictly parallel is his language in the Epistle to the Galatians (iii. 13); so much so, that the two passages can scarcely be considered separately. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being *made a curse for us*.”

“*Made sin for us* ;” “*made a curse for us* :”—who shall sound the whole depth of these mysterious

⁴ Isa. liii. 5, 6.

⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 24, quoting Isa. liii.

words? To comprehend them fully would be to enter into the whole mystery of redemption. Still, difficult as they are, they are full of instruction.

First, they do plainly assert some sort of vicariousness, however indistinct the outline they mark out—some interchange of parts between Christ and mankind—some shifting of our burden upon Him, and thereby escaping from it, and receiving blessing instead. We, who were under a curse, are “redeemed from that curse;” we, who were under the power of sin, are enabled to “become the righteousness of God.” Again: He, “*who knew no sin,*” was “*made sin;*” He, who was Himself *blessed*, was “*made a curse.*” It was Christ who redeemed us; it is “*in him*” we “*become the righteousness of God.*” There is here an interchange of parts, which certainly implies the general idea of substitution or vicariousness. But what is the exact nature of the interchange pointed to? What was the character which Christ assumed for us? This is not so easy to answer. The use of the abstract words *sin* and *curse* deprives these passages of that distinctness, in their assertion of the nature of Christ’s vicarious office, which we might have hoped for. Some have endeavoured to supply this apparent deficiency by interpreting these abstract terms as equivalent to certain concrete words. But what words would be suitable? Christ is doubtless here represented as in some way an impersonation of *curse* and *sin*. What, then, was He? Was He a sinner? No. As if to guard against such a mode of expounding his words, the Apostle says, that He who

was "made sin," was He "who knew no sin"—who was in no sense a sinner. But shall we say He was made a *sin-offering*? This is true, for it is often said elsewhere; and many (following Augustine) have so translated *ἀμαρτία* here. But independently of the doubt whether *ἀμαρτία*, by itself, ever means a sin-offering⁶, and passing by the probability that if this were his whole meaning, the Apostle would have said so less equivocally⁷,—the remarkable parallelism of the passage in Galatians, where no equally plausible word presents itself to replace the abstract *curse* (*κατάρα*), renders it probable that it was for some special reason the Apostle used these two abstract words. Perhaps in endeavouring to express, not the mere symbolic sacrifice, but that mystery to which it pointed—not a mere individual wrestler with the burden and curse of sin, but one who confronted its power as none had ever done—language failed, and the terminology that could describe the fortunes of the individual man had no word whereby to define the relation of the universal Saviour to the universal sin and curse. In the poverty of language the Apostle may have used the abstract word, because, however dim and imperfect in the meaning it conveyed, it at least gave rise to no misconception, as any concrete word that was within his reach might have done. But of the probability of such a conjecture we shall be better able to judge, when we reach a more ad-

⁶ Alford says that "*it never has this meaning even in LXX.*"

⁷ As by using *περὶ ἀμαρτιῶν*, as in Gal. i. 4, and 1 Pet. iii. 18. This would have preserved the antithesis.

vanced stage in our inquiry. For the present, I must leave these wonderful words of the Apostle, only repeating the remark of an eminent commentator^s, that "Christ became not only accursed, but *the curse*, "coextensive with the disability which affected us." There is at least this idea of extent given by the abstract words to the functions of Christ, which functions are, without any ambiguity, asserted to be vicarious in this sense,—that by his bearing the curse, we receive the blessing.

So far, while we cannot but acknowledge the united force of all these texts in asserting the vicariousness of Christ's functions, we feel that there is more or less of indistinctness in them all, and that it is difficult to elicit from them any very sharply defined theory of substitution. There is certainly much more here than Christ's sufferings being a consequence of others' sin. This would not fairly be called substitution. When a man's misconduct entails disease or suffering on his innocent offspring, or when the calamities which chastise national wickedness involve the innocent in ruin, such instances of penal sufferings reaching beyond their proper objects, or even passing by their proper objects to others, want that which is most essential to the idea of substitution. They want the reciprocation—the suffering returning back in blessing to those who merited the punishment. In fact they want that interchange of circumstances, which is essential to the idea of substitution.

^s De. in Alford. Commentary on Gal. iii. 13.

But if we add to the idea of *sufferings endured on the part of one by whom they were not deserved*, the further idea of their being endured *on behalf of, and so as to effect the deliverance of, those by whom they were deserved*⁹, we have what constitutes the ordinary idea of vicarious or substitutionary sufferings. At all events, whether they are rightly so designated, this is all which the texts we have been reviewing distinctly teach, and all, therefore, which we have any right to assert, when we talk of the vicariousness of Christ's sufferings. This "*suffering mediation*," as it has been well designated, is precisely analogous to that with which we are so familiar in God's natural government of the world, where men are saved from the consequences of their own folly, extravagance, or wickedness, by the friendly interposition of another, who may injure his own property and health, or endanger his own life, in the rescue of his friend. Of this kind are all those instances which Butler has adduced of analogies in God's natural government, to that which Scripture tells us of the mediation of Christ¹. And it is worthy of remark, that they would cease to be analogies, or at least they would be too imperfect for the purpose for which he adduces them, if we include more in Christ's vicariousness than that reciprocation of suffering and blessing, which is all we have been able to discover in the various texts hitherto examined. In short, if we mean more than this, by asserting

⁹ This is Dr. Wardlaw's definition. *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 358.

¹ Butler's Analogy, Part II. ch. v.

Christ's vicariousness, we debar ourselves from using against the infidel the argument from analogy, as Butler has used it on this point. Of course this would be a matter of secondary importance, if we have solid grounds for the doctrine we hold: but I make the remark, because many are willing enough to avail themselves of Butler's mode of arguing, while they hold a doctrine very different from his, and to which his argument is scarcely applicable.

But, no doubt, what we have ascribed to Christ's office falls very far short of that which many consider essential to true substitution. If they were right, it would be a very good reason for expunging such words as *vicarious* and *substitute* from our theological vocabulary; but it will not warrant us, after ascertaining the extent to which Scripture countenances the idea of substitution, to add to its teaching any further meaning which the word *vicariousness* may seem, from its etymology or popular use, to admit of. This would be dealing with the word as the schoolmen did with *satisfaction*. It would be seeking for truth, not in the Scripture itself, but in the evolution of theological terms. Instead of seeking to restrict the meaning of our terms to the doctrines which they were originally meant to express, we should thus stretch the meaning of Scripture, in order to make it coextensive with our arbitrarily adopted terminology. And, indeed, it too often happens that theologians are more jealous for the reputation of the language in which it has been at some time found convenient to clothe the teaching of Scripture, than for the truths

which that language was meant to embody. They forget that theological terms are not immutable, like Christian truth; and that the latter cannot expand and contract with the varying temperature of that in which it is enclosed. The armour that may be useful in one century, may be an incumbrance in another. Let men quarrel, if they will, with the wisdom of our choice of language in talking of Christ's vicarious office and substitutionary sufferings or obedience; but let them not force on such words a meaning which they have no right to bear, and which those who use them disclaim, and then convert this meaning into a ground for theory, or a mark for objections. Half the weapons which scepticism has levelled with too much effect against the doctrine of Christ's vicariousness, have indeed pierced through the verbal clothing which covered the doctrine; but if we strip it off, we shall find the truth itself untouched and impenetrable beneath.

But the language which speaks of Christ's vicarious functions—of his substitutionary sufferings and obedience—is really open to no fair objection, if we distinguish, as we do in our ordinary use of such words, between substitution as applied to *things* and to *personal acts*. In the case of *things*, the possibility of substitution or interchange depends on their own relative value. On this depends all commercial barter, all money dealings between man and man. A certain sum of money is always a discharge for a debt to that amount, no matter by whom it may be paid; and one coin is as good as another of the same

denomination for the purposes of exchange. It is altogether a question of *things*. But when we talk of *acts*, the value of one act as a substitute for another depends on its being able to produce equivalent effects; and consequently on the power, position, and other circumstances of the person who performs it. And in general, to make an act of one person a sufficient substitute for that of another, or others, he must be their adequate representative, or stand in some relation to them equivalent to that of a representative. Thus, the signature of an ambassador to a treaty is a sufficient substitute for that of the prince or governors who have duly appointed him to represent them; and the signature of the monarch himself is a substitute for the act of the whole nation over which he rules, not in virtue of any formal appointment, but in consequence of his relation to them as king—a relation which makes him include in his own person certain powers of the state, certain political privileges of his subjects. Many, not perceiving this distinction, have sought for the reason of the sufficiency of Christ's sufferings as a substitute for ours, in their exact equality to those which all mankind were doomed to suffer; as though He endured pang for pang, just as in paying a debt, we must pay pound for pound. *This is to confound the substitution of things with that of personal acts: it is to make Christ's sufferings not to be figuratively called a ransom, but really in their essence to be a matter of barter and exchange.* But if we ask, were Christ's sufferings and obedience coextensive in their effects

with man's sin and guilt, so that the one could counteract the other? then we may answer boldly, with abundant support from Scripture, that they were; and that this was part of the very truth the Apostle meant to assert, when he said that Christ was "made sin for us," "a curse for us." And does not this fairly deserve the name of substitution or vicariousness?

And here it should be observed, that there is in Christ's mediation no complete interchange of all the circumstances, as has been often implied, of Redeemer and redeemed; but only of *some* acts, and *some* circumstances. The vicarious suffering is not the permanent and final position assumed by the Mediator; but like those vicarious sufferings which prevail under God's natural government, a temporary arrangement which may be supposed finally to conduce to a just disposal of all God's creatures². Nor, again, is the reciprocated benefit obtained for man *in its whole extent*, immediate and inevitable. In neither the substitute, nor those for whom He suffers, are God's righteous dealings with men as responsible beings suspended or reversed. The Redeemer Himself earns the reward which belongs to his righteousness, while "opening the kingdom of heaven to all believers." *He is not* (as sceptical objectors so often assume) *an exception to God's righteous judgment of the world, but an instance of it*. If his followers win a crown, He wins a kingdom over them. Nor do his

² Butler's Analogy, Part II. ch. v. See NOTE 44.

substituted sufferings and obedience exempt his followers from danger and suffering, or free them from the necessity of making that choice—that momentous choice which seems to be the prerogative of every personal being—a choice between good and evil, between God and his enemy. Christ's vicarious functions do not exempt men from all their inheritance of pain and trial, though they make it possible to convert suffering into discipline, and death into the portal of a higher life. In short, they in no wise annul individual existence, or annihilate the circumstances in which men were previously placed. They do not make of Christ sinful, lost, and ruined man; nor man at once and inevitably a glorious, holy, and exalted Christ; but they open a door of intercommunion, through which flow precious gifts to man, without transposing his individuality, or even totally reversing his circumstances. In short, the *substitution extends only to some acts, and some circumstances; not to a total transposition*. Instead of Redeemer and redeemed passing by to occupy each the station which the other had left, they meet together in a union intimate and glorious.

But so far we have been dealing only with the *fact*, as stated in Scripture, of Christ's vicariousness, and its effects upon mankind. We have yet to inquire whether we can discover the *principle* on which the efficacy of his substitutionary acts depends; whether they can be traced to any general law, with whose operation in other instances we are conversant. In most cases of vicarious actions in human society,

their utility depends on the person by whom they are done being an adequate representative of those for whom he acts. Furthermore, we can see in such instances what constitutes the sufficiency of the representative. There is either a formal delegation of authority from those who have the right to confer it, as in the case of the ambassador; or there is some antecedent relation between the representative and those he personates, more efficacious than any formal appointment, as when a king acts on behalf of his people. We have already seen that Christ's representative character was implied in the names of priest and mediator; and something of the same kind is taught, when He is pointed to as the impersonation of the curse and sin of man. We may ask, then, *was this power to represent us a mere matter of appointment, as in the sacrificial type; or was it founded on deep and essential relations between Him and the whole human race?* And if so, can we understand the nature and limits of that relation, so as to touch the very principle of the Atonement—so as not only to recognise therein the presence of law, but to be able to enunciate the law itself, and show with logical precision its operation in reconciling God and man? Perhaps it may conduce to clearness to anticipate the conclusion to which this inquiry will lead us, and to say at once that *the efficacy of Christ's vicarious sufferings and obedience is not indeed based on any mere appointment—on any arbitrary transfer of suffering and obedience—but on deep and essential relations*

between God and Christ, and between Christ and man. But here our progress is arrested; and we can go little beyond establishing the existence of such relations, without attempting to define their nature and limits. The redemption of man, while in some measure depending on the forces and laws with which experience acquaints us, seems in part also to result from others which come not within the range of our knowledge. And thus, while we recognise the operation of forces with which we are familiar, we must perceive that other and vaster forces are at work, acting in unknown directions, and perhaps following unknown laws.

In no passage of Scripture is the influence of Christ more plainly ascribed to a certain relationship to the whole human race than in the passage (Romans v.) of which my text is the conclusion. Having spoken of Christ as "dying for the ungodly," as the source of pardon and reconciliation (*καταλλαγή*), and having fully laid down the doctrine of the Atonement; the Apostle proceeds to illustrate the effects attributed to Christ, by bringing forward an analogy which would be peculiarly striking to a Jew familiar with the writings of Moses and the story of the fall of man. He shows that the blessings received through Christ were strictly parallel to the evils inherited from Adam. The importance of this analogy in the Apostle's eyes may be inferred from his repeating this leading thought here in every variety of form; and making the same comparison again, though with

a somewhat different object, in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians³. Time will not permit us now to examine this passage very minutely; and it is the less necessary to do so, as the critical difficulties, which make it somewhat obscure in the connexion and bearing of details, scarcely affect its general scope and purpose; and this is all which concerns us at present. The comparison between Adam and Christ is twice repeated at the end of the passage; and the second repetition is that contained in our text, which thus sums up the comparison, "*For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*"

Of the two opposite standing-points from which this passage has been viewed, and the two utterly conflicting interpretations resulting therefrom, that of the Pelagians need not detain us long. It is really not an explanation, but an attempt to explain away the whole teaching of the passage; because its plain and natural meaning was found to be subversive of the fundamental idea of Pelagian theology⁴. For that system recognises no Divine dealings with mankind, except as so many isolated free individuals having no influence on one another except by example; and each standing or falling of his own free

³ In Corinthians he compares Adam only as the author of *death* with Christ the giver of *life*. In Romans they are the authors of *sin* and *righteousness*, including death and life in their consequences.

⁴ See Olshausen on Romans.

choice, unaffected in the completeness of his individual life by the general fortunes of his race. According to this theory, man in his religious capacity is nothing more than one of an aggregate of individuals; not the member of a system or family, whose fate depends no less on the fortune of the system to which he belongs, than on his own individual career. It is scarcely necessary to remind you, how completely, on such an hypothesis, man's position in his religious capacity would be unlike that in which he finds himself placed with regard to his temporal concerns. For though his position in social life does not usually annul his freedom, or convert the individual man into a mere wheel of the gigantic machine of human society, it is plain that it abridges and fetters his power of choice; and where society itself becomes hopelessly corrupt, no wisdom or exertion on the part of the individual can save his temporal happiness from total wreck. But to turn to the more perfect analogy insisted on by St. Paul. There was one signal instance in which the fault of an individual involved the ruin of the race; and this is the only true parallel to that mediation whereby one man's actions became efficacious for the restoration of all. Such a comparison is destructive of the fundamental idea of Pelagianism, as it does not exhibit men in a state of isolation and independence, such as that system assumes. But if we discard the Pelagian and kindred views, we can draw no other conclusion from this passage than that men are members of a great family, in their religious as in their temporal

capacity; and that not only do individuals exercise some influence on each other, but that there are centres from whence the influences which are propagated extend to the entire race. In such centres stood Adam and Christ. Individual members, indeed, they were of the human family, but standing in a relation to it such as no others have ever done. They were not mere members, but heads, whose acts are felt to the extremities of the body to which they belong. They were not separate branches, but stems on which all grew; joined to the other members of the human family by a connexion so intimate, as to constitute a sort of identity between them and mankind; such as that they could not fall or rise alone, but what happened to them must in some sort have happened to all. The corruption of Adam involved, as its necessary consequence in the chain of cause and effect, the corruption of his posterity and its consequence death. "*By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin*"⁵. So Christ's obedience involved, as its consequence, a spiritual renovation, producing the further effects of life and immortality⁶. In short, if this passage has any meaning—if the introduction of such a comparison here teaches any thing—it shows us Adam and Christ, not as isolated members, but as heads of the great family of man; standing in the centres of the human system, and

⁵ Rom. v. 12.

⁶ "*Much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*" Ver. 17.

propagating their influence for evil and good in ever-widening circles of death and life.

Thus, then, the influence of Christ's vicarious acts arises not only from the nature of those acts, considered in and by themselves, but from the relation in which He who performed them stood to those for whose good they were done. This peculiarity of Christ's human nature—by which He was not only a perfect man, but in some sense comprehended all men—theologians have in vain striven to express. In dogmatic teaching it has been called "*impersonalitas*;" and we hear continually such expressions as the "*true man*"—the "*representative man*"—the "*archetype of humanity*"—and such like. But all these names rather describe Christ's office negatively, than tell us what it really is. They are so many confessions that language has no name whereby to designate so transcendent a relationship as his; and this fairly considered will lead to the admission, that the relation itself has no parallel in the range of human experience. Even in the teaching of inspiration, the relation of Christ to his believing people can only be shadowed out by such analogies as that of the head to the members—of the vine to its branches. Thus, as far as we can see, neither the relation to mankind in virtue of which Christ suffered and made atonement for the sins of all, nor that closer relation, which the communion of the Holy Spirit establishes between Him and believers, can be described, save

¹ Philo designates the Logos, τὸν κατ' ἀλήθειαν ἄνθρωπον.

in figurative language, drawn from the imperfect analogy of earthly relations.

We must pass by many difficult and interesting questions which arise out of my text, and out of the whole passage of which it is the conclusion; and limit ourselves to that which bears strictly on the fact and nature of Christ's vicariousness. That Adam and Christ appear in this passage as the heads and representatives of their respective families, including in themselves the fortunes of the whole, will be generally admitted by those who have no sympathy with Pelagian or Socinian errors. And as we are ignorant of the laws by which children inherit from their ancestors peculiarities of body and mind, while the fact itself is indisputable; it seems reasonable to expect no further knowledge of the mysteries of inherited corruption, or life. When we are told of "*earthly things*," and understand not; how shall we understand when we are told of "*heavenly things*?" But men *will* try to comprehend all things; and if they cannot raise their faculties to grasp the objects presented to them, they will lower those objects to their own level. Thus many have found in this passage, as they supposed, an account of the exact nature of the relation in virtue of which Adam and Christ became the originators of such effects. For they appear here doubtless as, in some sense, representatives of the human race. It has been attempted therefore to apply to them with literal exactness the idea of a representative, or *federal head*—as one appointed to do vicarious acts, which should bind all whom he

represented. These interpreters have thus cut short the chain of cause and effect, by referring the consequences of Adam's sin to a Divine appointment, which at once transferred to his descendants the guilt of his offence; and in like manner they have reduced Christ's relation to the human race to one of mere representation, and the effect of his acts to the result of a mere arbitrary transfer of their merit. We cannot now discuss this doctrine in detail. But we may observe that it is not (as indeed some of its defenders admit ^a) stated in this passage by St. Paul; but is introduced by his interpreters to complete the comparison, which it is thereby implied that Paul left incomplete. In truth it is an attempt to supply the missing links in the chain of cause and effect; or rather to conceal the want of them, by resolving certain sequences into the immediate appointment of God, as we have failed to trace them to any general law of his government. In this passage, at all events, such a theory is not stated; and therefore its advocates must be prepared to seek proof for it elsewhere.

It is true that, in the sacrificial type, the connexion between the victim and the offerer was founded altogether on positive enactment. No connexion between them existed previously ^b, nor was any thing more than an external relation superadded by the imposition of hands, and offering in sacrifice. It might therefore be imagined that the relation between Christ and his believing people—the antitypes of the

^a See NOTE 45.

^b Except that of property, and perhaps not always that.

Jewish sacrifice and worshipper—was no more than this; and that we must consider the benefits which flow from Christ's death to be no more than an arbitrary transfer of his merits, in virtue of a Divine appointment¹. But we cannot thus infer that the type exhausts the meaning of that to which it points. On the contrary, it may be impossible that the type should in all respects perfectly represent the antitype. If, as we have supposed, the relation of Christ to mankind was of a transcendent kind, which had no adequate parallel on earth; it was impossible that any type could be found perfectly to represent it. And in the absence of any really parallel relation, one grounded on Divine appointment, from which all true relations ultimately spring, was at once the nearest to the truth, and the least likely to give rise to unworthy theories. The Epistle to the Hebrews seems to intimate very plainly that the sacrificial type was thus defective; for while it always speaks of the legal sacrifices as having no natural efficacy, that of Christ is expressly contrasted with them in this very point, as possessing an intrinsic value of the highest kind. It is true that this value is not reduced to any earthly standard of measurement, so that we can distinctly understand and precisely state its nature², beyond that it is shown to fulfil every condition understood to be necessary for a perfect offering by a perfect priest. Still Christ's fitness for his priestly functions is traced to deep and essential relations between Him and the parties between whom He medi-

¹ See NOTE 46.

² See LECTURE II.

ates. Every where through the Epistle we find a priesthood, a mediation, and a sacrifice, which have no true parallels on earth; and of which we can only faintly discern the outline by the dim shadows they project in the teaching of prophecy and type.

That the value of Christ's vicarious sufferings depends, not merely on their own nature and amount, but on his relation to the human race, is further confirmed by what the Scripture very distinctly teaches of the necessity for a union of the most intimate kind between Him and believers, in order that they may receive the full benefit of his Atonement. As the consequences of Adam's sin only show themselves subjectively, as men are born into the world: so the blessings of Christ's sufferings and obedience are only manifested subjectively, when men are born again into the family of Christ, by spiritual regeneration; and incorporated into Him by that mysterious union and communion, which forms the subject of so large a part of St. John's Gospel. The communication of "life" there continually spoken of, is no matter of mere legal imputation, or arbitrary transfer; but a real imparting of his own nature, through real union with Himself. But if the blessings won by his vicarious sufferings thus return to us through a real relation established between us and Him, it seems but natural to suppose, that the sufferings themselves arose from a real relation between Christ and that sinning, suffering race for which He died. Thus, He receives from mankind the burden of their sufferings and conflict with evil; and in turn He communicates

to them the fellowship of his life and glory. *As mediator on man's part*, He had to take upon Him man's nature, and to sum up ("*recapitulare*") humanity in Himself; and so He suffered, and wrestled with the evil one, and "died for all," so that in his dying "all died³:" *as mediator on God's part*, He was in union with the Divine essence, and possessed that "life in himself⁴," which raised Him gloriously from the grasp of death, and made Him a "quickening spirit⁵" to the Church. As the first part of his office has been called "*suffering mediation*," the latter may perhaps advantageously be termed *triumphant* or *kingly mediation*. And if the latter implied the necessity for his being one with God and with each individual believer; the former seems equally to require, not merely that He should take human nature, but that He should be *the* man, the second head of our race, standing in some real relation to every member of the human family. That the union of Christ with believers should be, as it plainly is, of a more intimate and glorious kind than any previously existing, does not prove that no union at all existed before, but that its fulness waited for his exaltation and triumph, and the consequent descent of the Holy Ghost. The first union was the "taking of the manhood into God;" the second was the communication of the Divine nature to man⁶. "*Because I live*," says our blessed Lord, "*ye shall*

³ 2 Cor. v. 14; wrongly translated in E. V.

⁴ John v. 26.

⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 45.

⁶ 2 Pet. i. 4.

live also." "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you¹." "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and *we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*²." Such is the consummation of that vicariousness—that interchange of nature and circumstances—which, commenced at the incarnation by the union then formed with the many who had been "made sinners," ends in a union which "makes many righteous," and leads "many sons to glory³."

But, in conclusion, we may observe, that, though Christ's vicarious sufferings exempt us from the real evil which we must otherwise have suffered, they do not actually and entirely exempt us from suffering and death. These are indeed no longer to believers what they were before—the inheritance of Adam's curse—but "the fellowship of Christ's sufferings⁴" in his struggle against that curse. In virtue of their union with Him, the Apostles represent believers as reproducing in themselves the various stages of the life of Christ. "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him⁵." It is no empty figure our being "buried with Christ," that we may "also live with him⁶;" our "old man being crucified with him⁷;" our "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ⁸." No; we have here a

¹ John xiv. 19, 20.

² John xiv. 23.

³ Heb. ii. 10.

⁴ Phil. iii. 10.

⁵ 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

⁶ Rom. vi. 4—8.

⁷ Rom. vi. 6.

⁸ Col. i. 24.

real result of our real union with Him; in virtue of which we are not made partakers of the glory which follows, without sharing in the sufferings which precede. *The interchange is not merely that He suffered, and we are glorified: but that as He received of our curse and suffering, so we partake both of his suffering in the struggle against evil⁶, and of his triumph, and of his glory.* Thus we are exempted from the pain and death which were our share in the universal curse, that we may take them again hallowed and consecrated to higher ends, as no longer evil, but good. We lay our suffering and sorrow on Him, that we may receive them back, not as punishment, but as discipline. We part with death as the lowest degradation of humanity; that we may undergo it as the scene of man's highest triumph—the victory over him who “had the power of death” —the entrance to our Saviour's glory. Death and the grave are ours again; but in union with Him who has extracted their sting, and turned their triumph into defeat. Thus already, even amidst this scene of trial, “all things are yours.” Not only “Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world,” but “life, and “death, and things present, and things to come; all “are yours⁸.” Yes, all *are* yours—ordered for your good—your servants, not your masters: and all in virtue of that ineffable union, on which alone your title rests. For, “*Ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's⁹.*”

⁶ See NOTE 47.

⁸ 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.

⁷ Heb. ii. 14.

⁹ 1 Cor. iii. 23.



LECTURE VI.

THE RELATION OF THE ATONEMENT TO GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT, AND MAN'S MORAL NATURE.

ROMANS iii. 21—26.

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

THIS important passage, which has been well styled “the citadel of the Christian faith,” not only exhibits Christ’s work as a sacrifice and a redemption (in which aspects we have already viewed it), but also bears upon the great question we have to consider to-day, namely: *how is the Atonement related to God’s moral government*—to his law, and his attributes? Let us, then, inquire what light is thrown

on this subject by the declaration of the Apostle, that God is at once "*just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*"

But before we enter on the examination of the text, let us make sure that we know what we mean by these common words, *holy* and *holiness*, *just* and *justice*, *righteous* and *righteousness*. They meet us at every turn of the discussion, and will surely lead to error, unless we use them with exactness and uniformity of meaning.

The words *holy* and *holiness* denote that intrinsic excellence of character, which in its perfection we ascribe to God, and in a lower degree to his saints. *Holy*, in this sense, is usually denoted in the New Testament by ἅγιος¹; and sometimes, but less frequently, by ὁσιος. But when, instead of a perfection which might be merely passive, we contemplate this holiness as exerted in action—as having to do with others, with their necessities and rights—it is not called holiness, but *righteousness* or *justice*. It is generally the same class of Greek words (namely, those derived from δίκη) which are translated, in our version of the New Testament, either by the word *righteous* or *just*. Thus, in my text God is said to be "*just*" (δικαιος), and in ver. 5 the cognate word ἄδικος is translated "*unrighteous*;" and throughout my text it is the substantive from the same root (δικαιοσύνη) which is translated "*righteousness*," while the verb δικαιόω is rendered "*justify*." This ren-

¹ As in 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

dering of one class of Greek words by two different sets of English words (*just* and *righteous*, and their compounds), very much confuses the connexion in my text and elsewhere, though it was perhaps unavoidable. Thus, in our version of the New Testament, the words *just* and *righteous* must be regarded as synonymous, though we generally make some difference between them in our ordinary use.

But what idea did the Apostle attach to his words, when he calls God righteous or just? There seems always to be a reference in these words to some fixed order of law or government. Thus, in ver. 2, when he says, "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" he answers, "God forbid: for then how shall God "judge the world?" In these words, righteousness is regarded not only as having reference to the administration of a system of government, but with special reference to the distribution of sanctions. And this is, indeed, the proper notion of God's justice or righteousness. We ascribe these qualities to Him as distinct from holiness, on the supposition that He is not merely a creator but a governor, who distributes rewards and punishments, according to the holiness or unholiness of his subjects. Thus, in the book of Revelation angelic beings are described as crying day and night, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God "Almighty" (*ἅγιος, ἅγιος, ἅγιος*); but when his judgment on Babylon is their theme, their words are, "True and *righteous* (*δίκαιαι*) are his judgments"—

² Rev. iv. 8.

“for he hath avenged the blood of his servants¹.” But the righteousness of God is manifested not merely in punishing, but in rewarding and fulfilling his gracious promises of mercy. Thus, St. John says, “If we confess our sins, he is *faithful and just* (πιστὸς καὶ δίκαιος) *to forgive us our sins*, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness².” It is very necessary to bear in mind that God’s righteousness or justice is manifested not only in the execution of his threats, but also in the fulfilment of his gracious promises, which alone render it possible for man ever to receive reward. It is therefore said, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that “God is not unrighteous (ἄδικος) to forget your work and labour of love³,” which implies, that God would have been unrighteous if He had failed to reward, according to his promise, actions, which in themselves, doubtless, were but the imperfect performance of “unprofitable servants.”

Having thus endeavoured to fix the meaning of these important words, let us inquire what the Apostle had in his mind, when he said that God showed Himself to be just, while justifying the believer in Jesus? It is easy to see the difficulty which must have suggested itself to any one, particularly to a Jew, on hearing the Gospel message of pardon. He would say, God has always revealed Himself, in the revelation of conscience, as well as in the law of Moses, as one who “*will by no means clear the guilty*⁴ :” but you preach *pardon to sinners*. Surely,

¹ Rev. xix. 2.

² 1 John i. 9.

³ Heb. vi. 10.

⁴ Exod. xxxiv. 7, and Numb. xiv. 18

God's justice requires that He should fulfil his threats, and execute the sentence of his law.

But, let it be observed, that although the Apostle supplies an answer to this difficulty, and vindicates the consistency of the Gospel message with the Divine justice, he does not directly discuss the relation of Christ's atoning work to the righteous character of God. *He is speaking chiefly in this passage not of Christ's Atonement, but of man's justification*; not of the principle of an objective propitiation, but of the propriety of extending a free pardon to man in apparent contradiction to the menaces of law.

Bearing in mind, then, that it is man's justification, and not Christ's work of atonement, which is the immediate point under discussion, let us consider the words of the text. In the previous part of the chapter it was proved that all, Jew and Gentile, were alike guilty before God; and, therefore, that the legal mode of justification, however excellent in itself, was useless. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight⁷."

Having thus set aside justification by works, the Apostle proceeds to describe the Gospel method of pardon and acceptance. He introduces it under the title the "righteousness of God⁸." And in this name is exhibited its essential character. It emanates not from man himself, nor from his works, but from God. Hence it is said immediately after (in ver. 24) to be given "freely by his grace." But what was its rela-

⁷ Ver. 20.

⁸ See NOTE 48.

tion to the law? We are told it was independent of —*distinct from* the law (χωρὶς νόμου). That is, it was not to be obtained by any fulfilment of the works of the law, or by any compliance with its directions. For these words χωρὶς νόμου refer specially to the previous verse, "By the deeds of the law there shall "no flesh be justified;" and are almost *equivalent to* χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου, *i. e.* distinct from the righteousness which was generated by the performance of legal works. Thus, without conflicting with the law, the dispensation of grace was independent of it, and distinct from it; yet not so distinct, but that the law itself had reference to it, and bore *witness* of its approach. That a new mode of acceptance by grace, and not by works, should be proclaimed, was only that for which the law itself sought to prepare the Jew, by no obscure reference in its types and sacrifices. Therefore, though "*without the law*" (χωρὶς νόμου), the Gospel grace was "μαρτυρουμένη ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου," "*witnessed by the law*," no less than "by the prophets."

But if we wish to ascertain how the law *witnessed* to the advent of grace, we must not confine our attention to its moral precepts and penal sanctions. The sacrifices and purifications were no less an integral part of the Mosaic law than the decalogue itself, however different in their purpose and importance⁹.

If the law be viewed in this way as a whole, the idea of its just execution included not only the infliction of certain penalties attached to specific offences,

⁹ See NOTE 49.

but also their remission under certain prescribed conditions. The Jew might, indeed, have sought in vain within the circle of his legal code for perfect and assured forgiveness¹, but he could find in it forgiveness up to a certain point, and sufficiently clear intimations of a wider range of mercy yet to be revealed. Side by side with the moral law and its sanctions was an expiatory system, which, however deficient in its scope and efficacy, yet plainly introduced a principle of forgiveness, and of refuge from the severity of the moral law. It was an admitted principle of the legal dispensation, that sins might be pardoned if an atonement was provided; and it seemed impossible to avoid regarding this principle as applicable to higher sanctions than those of the Mosaic polity. God's justice, therefore, according to the idea of an Israelite about his own law, might be satisfied indifferently by either inflicting punishment, or extending pardon in connexion with atonement; the difference being, that in the latter case mercy was combined with justice.

Moreover, the "*witness*" thus given by the legal expiations to the advent of a better hope, received confirmation and fulness from another source. As the moral law with its sanctions was only a part of the Mosaic code, so *that code was far from being the whole of the religion of an Israelite*. It neither was, nor was ever intended by God to be, the whole rule and guide of his people, within which their hopes and duties were to be strictly confined. In fact, a large

¹ See Lecture I., and APPENDIX.

part of the *personal* religion of every Israelite remained just as it had been before the promulgation of the Mosaic code, though his privileges under the theocracy were then, for the first time, created and defined. *The promises of grace and mercy were co-eval with the fall.* It was not the Gospel which came to supersede the law, but the law which had been "added" to the promise of the Gospel, "till the seed should come to whom the promise was made". As St. Paul tells us, "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham³." And surely, we may acquiesce without difficulty in his conclusion from this fact, namely, "that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect⁴."

Thus, then, the Israelite had the "gospel" and "promise" (ἐπαγγελία), and "covenant" of Abraham, and all the traditions of the patriarchal religion, to which was added by Moses the sterner teaching of his law. And thus we learn but half his faith and practical religion from the last four books of Moses. The law seems to have been left designedly incomplete⁵, while provision was made for keeping up and extending the more personal parts of the Jewish religion, by the institution and growth of the prophetic

² Gal. iii. 19.

³ Gal. iii. 8.

⁴ Gal. iii. 17.

⁵ It was complete only as a system of theocratic government, not as an institute of religion.

office. Thus, even in the days of Moses, his followers had promises and hopes “χωρίς νόμου,” which were the very life of their piety; and which formed the first links in that chain of testimony to which the Apostle appeals as *the witness of the prophets*. The Gospel “righteousness,” then, was no violation of the principle of former dispensations, but the natural and proper completion of that which was imperfectly exhibited in them. God was not unjust because He set aside the rigour of the law, to justify the believer; but He would have been untrue to his own covenant and promise, to the symbolic meaning of the legal ceremonies, as well as to the predictions He had put into the mouths of the prophets, if the hopes of mankind had remained for ever bound up within the iron ramparts of a penal code—in itself indeed “holy, and just, and good⁶,” but unsuited to meet all the wants of a fallen creature, and incapable of making good the covenant and promises of grace, to whose fulfilment the truth and justice of God were alike distinctly pledged.

In one sense, then, evidently God was “just,” while “justifying” the believer; namely, as fulfilling hopes and promises which He had Himself held out. He was “faithful and just to forgive sins, and cleanse “from all unrighteousness’.” But is this the sense in which St. Paul uses the word “just” in our text? The connexion seems to point to a different aspect of God’s justice from that which merely fulfils promises

⁶ Rom. vii. 12.

⁷ 1 John i. 9.

of mercy. And to this I would now direct your attention.

The Apostle speaks here twice of an *ἐνδειξις*, or manifestation of God's righteousness; such as to prove Him to be at once "just, and a justifier." He also speaks of the necessity for this manifestation, *on account of his having in his forbearance passed by the sins of former ages* which seemed to call for legal punishment⁸. This passing by sins (*πάρεσις*⁹) is probably the same as that of which he spoke at Athens, when he said, "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent¹." The long-suffering of God would have thus seemed an infringement of his justice—a dishonour to his righteous government—had He not given some *ἐνδειξις* or notable manifestation of his justice. But what is this manifestation to which the Apostle appeals? According to his view, it is God's "setting forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood," which "declares his righteousness," which shows Him to be "just," even while "justifying" the believer, and releasing him from the penalties of law. This seems to be the connexion in the Apostle's mind between the mercy and the justice of God. The former would have been exhibited in simple forgiveness, the latter in punish-

⁸ διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγοτότων ἀμαρτημάτων ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

⁹ This is the only place in the New Testament where this word occurs.

¹ Acts xvii. 30.

ment: the idea of forgiveness through propitiation seems to him so plainly to include both, that he thinks no further explanation necessary. He has reached a first principle, recognised alike by himself and those to whom he wrote.

All, then, which we can elicit from our text is, that the Gospel scheme of mercy was one essentially of grace and gratuitous forgiveness, as opposed to one of legal works; and that its consistency with God's justice is shown by its resting on a propitiation (*ἱλαστήριον*), according to a principle which the law itself recognised and "*witnessed*." Here, then, we come to the same check which arrested our progress in our interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews ². The Apostle makes no attempt to vindicate the principle of the Atonement itself, or to show its consistency with any abstract principles of justice, or with the Divine attributes apart from their reflection in the Mosaic law. He is satisfied in both places with showing the harmony of the Gospel and the Law, and falls back on the admitted principle of sacrificial expiation as the ultimate axiom by which God's free pardon of sinners is to be justified ³. Nor let it be supposed that in so doing he was arguing exclusively on Jewish principles, which had no authority except with the disciples of Moses. On the contrary, he was appealing to a principle—that of expiatory remission—which was recognised by the heathen also, and which formed the basis of every known system of worship.

² See Lecture II. p. 58.

³ See NOTE 50.

It was a principle which must have worn the appearance of an undisputed axiom, not only to the Apostle himself, but to every convert, Jew or Gentile, by whom his Epistles were read.

The text, then, is far from being (as has been sometimes supposed) a vindication of the justice of the principle of atonement. On the contrary, the Apostle *assumes* that atonement is not only consistent with justice, but a declaration of it (ἐνδειξις); and that it is the pardon of sinners which requires a vindication. The text has far more to do with justification—or the application of the benefits of atonement—than with atonement itself; and consequently our inquiry into the interpretation of it has been, in a great measure, a digression from our immediate subject. The *negative result* thus obtained is, however, of the utmost importance. For, if the justice exhibited in atonement is not proved, but assumed by the Apostle as an elementary truth, this will force us to give up the hope of finding an answer to difficulties, which belong to our own age and modes of thought, in passages like my text, where the difficulty removed is exactly the opposite of that which we ourselves generally feel. However satisfactory the reasoning of the text may have been in removing the scruples felt by those trained up under the teaching of sacrificial religions, who would never object to Christianity because it preached an atonement for sin, although they might stumble at its freeness and catholicity, it fails to answer the difficulties which *we* feel most strongly; and which have led some to challenge the

principle of expiation itself, and to object to the Gospel, not for setting aside the law, but for retaining so much of it as to recognise and adopt the principle of expiatory remission.

To such objections the New Testament furnishes no direct answer. And, in the absence of inspired guidance, any attempt to supply this deficiency from mere conjecture, or from the analogy of civil government, must be both uncertain and defective. Nevertheless, our uncertain answers are at least as trustworthy as the objections of our opponents, and may help to deprive them of their apparent force. If, then, we are asked, *why* it was a law of the Divine government to demand the alternative of punishment or expiation—*why*, if punishment be remitted at all, expiation is still demanded? without professing to give a complete answer to these questions, we may yet discern *some probable reasons* for the principle on which all God's dispensations have alike rested.

First, then, let us remark that *expiation is not punishment*. The Apostle, on the contrary, calls the pardon which springs from it *gratuitous forgiveness*⁴. In his mind expiation and punishment are as much opposed as grace and debt—grace and law. Expiation is rather a commutation of punishment—a substitute for it—which must be supposed to answer the same or higher ends in the Divine government, than those for which punishment was ordained; but with more tenderness to the offender. The typical atone-

⁴ δικαιοῦμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ χάριτι (ver. 24).

ments of the law, and the far greater offering to which they pointed, *were both alike penal in this sense*, that they bore a plain and impressive reference to the punishment which the sinner had deserved, and took its place in the Divine government. But it is a point of the last importance to remember that expiation was not *punishment (properly so called)*; and therefore that all objections which proceed on that supposition are nugatory. On this point, there are two extreme views to be avoided, the one which makes the sacrifice to be identical with the legal penalty of sin; and the other which denies that sacrifice has any reference to punishment at all. The latter view (of which I have already spoken⁵ as that held by Bähr and his followers) probably originated in a reaction against extreme statements of the penal character of sacrifice. But if we steer a middle course, we must, when we speak of the *penal sufferings of Christ*, admit that *we use the word penal in a peculiar sense as expressing* the relation of those sufferings, not to Him who bore them, but to our demerits in which they originated. To adopt the language of Archbishop Magee, the vicarious sufferings of an innocent person⁶ cannot in strictness be called punishment, "because "the idea of punishment cannot be abstracted from "that of guilt." "Notwithstanding," he adds, "it is "a judicial infliction; and it may perhaps be figuratively denominated punishment, if thereby be "implied a reference to the actual transgressor⁷."

⁵ See Lectures III. and IV.

⁶ See NOTE 51.

⁷ Magee, Note 42, p. 294.

He says a little further on, "It is, however, upon the whole, to be wished, that the word *punishment* had not been used; the meaning is substantially the same without it; and the adoption of it has furnished the principal ground of cavil to the adversaries of the doctrine of atonement, who affect to consider the word as applied in its strict signification, and consequently as implying the transfer of actual guilt." He says elsewhere with regard to the nature of the suffering inflicted on the sacrificial victim, "Vicarious punishment is not contended for, but merely an emblematic substitute, the result of institution, and which in no respect involves the notion of an equivalent *."

But if we discard the notion of atonement being only a particular form of punishment, and regard it as the substitute which Divine wisdom has appointed to take its place in certain cases; let us inquire reverently whether we can discover any fitness in the substitute for the part assigned to it, either by its fulfilling the same ends as punishment, or by its preventing the evils which might arise from simple remission.

Let us look first at the effect on the offender himself. Expiation, at the very moment of pardon, recognises the guilt of the transgressor, and does homage to the offended majesty of law. Simple forgiveness, on the other hand, seems to have a plain tendency to blunt the perception of guilt, and so to

* Magee, Note 38, p. 233.

paralyse conscience and convert the law into a dead letter—a set of enactments made only to be rescinded. And in proportion as the sense of guilt and the respect for law diminished, would the mercy exhibited in forgiving sins seem also to diminish; till pardon became too much a matter of course to command gratitude or love, till it was regarded not as grace but as debt, not as that which man might hope from God's mercy, but that which he might demand as his right. That expiation prevented these and other evils, scarcely requires proof. The homage paid to law, and through law to the lawgiver, the recognition of the parallel claims of justice and mercy, is a truth plainly written on the whole sacrificial institute, and on that greater offering to which it pointed.

And, if from the effects of atonement on the culprit himself, we turn to consider its influence on others (whose benefit doubtless was considered, in the appointment both of punishment and atonement), we can see the same propriety in pardon being accompanied by expiation. Otherwise the tendency of punishment to deter from sin, or make it appear hateful, would be altogether lost. But though we can so far discern the fitness and propriety of the method of pardon which God has proclaimed, it would be presumptuous to assert that these advantages were the final cause—the whole scope and purpose of Christ's sufferings and death⁹. St. John tells us that “for this purpose the Son of God was manifested,

⁹ See NOTE 52.

“that he might destroy the works of the devil¹.” But if we cannot understand the nature and origin of those powers of evil which Christ came to conquer, nor the reason why they are so long permitted to ruin and deface the works of God, how shall we comprehend the nature and efficacy of that remedial system, which stands face to face with evil, and which centres in the Atonement? However clearly we may discern particular aspects of this great truth, we can never feel sure that we apprehend its whole scope and purpose. Those ends which come within the range of our knowledge *may be* few and insignificant, compared to others which have not been revealed, or which utterly transcend our comprehension.

So far, then, our inquiry tends to show—

1. That the principle of sacrificial atonement was so entirely in conformity with the Mosaic law, and all previous dispensations, as well as with a leading idea of the Gentile religions, that the Apostle assumes this principle as an elementary truth. And this accounts for his giving no further vindication of God’s justice, than that which appeared alike to himself and his readers to be implied in the fact, that God “*set forth his Son to be a propitiation.*”

2. Turning, then, from the teaching of Scripture to that of natural reason, our inquiry tended further to show that there is a *fitness* in the arrangement which combines expiation with pardon, and that it commends itself to *our* judgment as better suited to

¹ 1 John iii. 8.

carry out the ends of a righteous government than simple forgiveness.

3. But a great question still remains before we complete our inquiry into the place which the Atonement occupies in the Divine government; and that is, *what is its relation to man's moral nature*—to that constitution which God Himself has given us to be our guide?

Many objections, derived from our natural sense of what is just and right, have been made to the whole idea of expiation, and also to particular parts of the Christian doctrine of atonement. We cannot now enter on a detailed examination of these objections; but it may be well to remark that very few of them apply to the doctrine of atonement as I have stated it. They are, for the most part, objections to that form of the theory of satisfaction against which I have argued; and they are generally directed against the possibility or justice of transferring guilt and *punishment* (properly so called). But such a transfer has no place in that reciprocation or vicariousness of functions which the various texts we examined taught us to ascribe to Christ². We need, therefore, feel no hesitation in following Archbishop Magee, and disclaiming the doctrine of a transfer of actual guilt as unscriptural and a contradiction in terms, for as he says, "*Neither guilt nor punishment can be conceived, but with reference to consciousness which cannot be transferred*"³. If some go further

² See Lecture V.

³ Magee, Note 38, p. 227.

than this, and object not only to the transfer of guilt, but to the justice of any suffering endured by an innocent person for the benefit of others; they object to an arrangement which (however difficult to understand) is part of the regular course of God's natural government, and which will therefore remain a difficulty in every system which stops short of downright Atheism[†]. But, as many such difficulties are always arising from a comparison of the facts of the Divine government with our notions of right and justice, it may be well to make a few general observations on all such discrepancies, and the light in which they ought to be regarded.

It is true, that we cannot help forming ideas of God's justice, from our own moral nature, prior to all knowledge of his dispensations; and we demand intuitively, that whatever claims to be a revelation from Him, should not contradict these conceptions. That the Divine justice is like that quality in man, from which we derive the name and the idea, cannot reasonably be disputed. But we are not thereby qualified to sit in judgment on each particular part of an infinite scheme of government, and pronounce on its justice or injustice. To do so, implies that we know all the bearings of that on which we pronounce an opinion. But when we see only a very few of the relations in which any particular dispensation stands to the rest of the Divine government—when we are but partially acquainted with the causes that pro-

[†] See NOTE 53.

duced it, and the ends which it was designed to answer—it is the height of folly and presumption to pass judgment upon it⁵. Our own moral intuitions bear continual testimony to the character of Him who gave them to us; and, moreover, they utter a clear prophecy amid the confusion of this lower world, as to what will be found eventually to be the character and issue of the Divine government. Meanwhile, however, we cannot always reconcile their predictions with the particular facts of that government which cross our path, whether in the world of nature or of grace. In both cases our ignorance is a sufficient plea to silence objections and difficulties, which we must confess our inability to answer perfectly.

But having admitted that our own moral nature is a sufficient guide to the general principles of justice, though from want of knowledge we may be incompetent judges of the applicability of these principles in each particular case; there arises a further question, which is a most important branch of our subject. I mean, *in what way does this particular dispensation of forgiveness by atonement answer the wants of our moral nature?* We are, doubtless, incompetent judges of its place in the infinite scheme of Providence; and we cannot, perhaps, trace the relation of every part to those eternal rules of right and justice which it will be found ultimately to promote: but we may discern its adaptation to our own immediate wants. If it partakes of the incomprehensible nature of Him from

⁵ See Butler's *Analogy*, Part I. ch. vii., and Part II. ch. iv.

whom it comes, it ought also to be adapted to the nature and wants of those for whose good it is revealed.

It seems, then, to be a legitimate object of inquiry, how far the Atonement, as the revealed object of faith, is fitted to meet the instinctive wants and cravings of the human heart? How does God's revelation of mercy, coming from without, harmonize with the feelings which He has planted within? How does the spiritual food which is presented to us, suit the digestive and assimilating powers of the being to whom it is offered? Or (to use an illustration more in accordance with our immediate subject), how does the medicine which is offered to heal our malady, suit the constitution and ailments of him for whom it is prescribed ⁶?

To carry out this illustration: we might ascertain the suitability of a medicine to check a particular disease, either experimentally, by trying its effect upon the patients, or scientifically, by analyzing the medicine, and so conjecturing what its efficacy might be. The former would be doubtless the more satisfactory method, though the latter might be more flattering to the scientific knowledge of the physician. The result of the experimental test, in the case of the Atonement of the cross, is one to which all teachers of Christianity bear abundant testimony. That this doctrine, when thoroughly apprehended, has deepened the sense of sin, while kindling the hope of pardon into assurance; that it has produced love to God, and

⁶ See NOTE 54.

love to man, while dashing to pieces the figment of human merit; that it has been the root of all Christian graces, while teaching their possessor to centre his faith in something beyond and above those graces; that it has imparted patience under suffering, triumphant joy amid the pangs of dissolution; all these are facts which every Christian biography, which every believer in Christ Jesus, will attest. The power of the Atonement over the human heart needs no panegyric from us to exalt its efficacy. It will be found written on the heart of every penitent, recorded in the muster-roll of those "who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

But if, instead of this experimental method of showing the adaptation of the Atonement to man's spiritual wants, we endeavour to analyze his nature, and trace the particular points of correspondence between the diseased constitution and the truths which are offered for its healing, we enter on a task of great difficulty and uncertainty. The general fact, that forgiveness through expiation is an idea to which men cling with more tenacity than to that of simple forgiveness, seems implied in the hold which sacrificial systems have ever had upon the human mind, and in the power which the preaching of the cross has ever exerted. But when we pierce into the depths of our own consciousness, and ask why this is so, we shall not find it easy to answer. The obscurity which hangs over all the more subtle operations of the intellect and affections, is heightened in this case by the

difficulty of distinguishing between what is normal and what is depraved—what is healthy and what is diseased; and it is the office of true religion not to address itself to all the instincts of human nature indiscriminately, but to resuscitate what is noble—to repress and eradicate what is base and earthly.

Foremost among those faculties which have survived the fall, and to the resuscitation of which religion is directed, stands conscience or the moral faculty; which not only stamps our actions as right or wrong, but by the sense of good and ill desert, which accompanies its exercise, actually sentences them to reward or punishment. This faculty—which we cannot help regarding as the authoritative voice of Him who made us—corresponds exactly, in its functions and its judgments, to the moral law delivered on Mount Sinai. The one is the objective, the other the subjective law, whose authority we recognise as different but parallel revelations of the one true God. And as “by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified,” because none can keep its holy enactments; so by the voice of conscience (taken by itself) shall none escape condemnation. *The decalogue and the moral faculty are alike a “ministration of death”⁷ to all who hear their voice alone.* And, as the law was, by its very severity, a “schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ;”⁸ so the condemning voice of conscience, and the sense of guilt, which is universal in our race, are the common foundation on which the Gospel teaching every where rests

⁷ 2 Cor. iii. 7.

⁸ Gal. iii. 24.

—the common door by which it finds an entrance into the heart of the philosophic Greek, and the unlettered savage. To use the words of Chalmers, "*Natural religion emits, and emits audibly a note of terror* ¹;" and thus any religion which promises an escape from this terror is highly valued, and eagerly sought for by those who "have ears to hear"—whose "minds" have not been "blinded" by "the god of this world ¹." Thus (in common with every system of forgiveness) the Gospel of Jesus Christ finds a foundation for its teaching in the universal feeling of guilt, and the anxiety to escape from its intolerable burden.

But the admonitions of conscience no more constitute the whole of our spiritual being, than the moral law and its penal sanctions were the whole of the Mosaic code, or of the personal religion of every Israelite. At least coextensive with its judgments is the hope of forgiveness, the conviction that the law-giver can pardon as well as punish. This shows itself in the fact, which Mr. Thompson notices in his Bampton Lectures, that "*never has the mind of man, driven to construct a worship from its natural resources, invented a religion of despair* ²." How is this to be accounted for? Conscience in and by itself, speaks only of punishment to transgressors. Moreover, it actually generates a craving for punishment in the human heart—a craving which makes us wish to see criminals punished—nay, which (despite of the many opposing instincts of our nature that shrink from

¹ Natural Theology (concluding chap.).

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 4.

² Thompson, Lecture I. p. 22.

The broad fact that men left to themselves have “never invented a religion of despair”—and that all religions presuppose the possibility of forgiveness, and profess to teach the way to attain it—is proof enough that the menaces of conscience, with whatever authority they speak, are not regarded as precluding the hope of pardon. Still there is an evident difficulty in reconciling these two parts of our nature—the same difficulty which met us in determining the diverse and apparently conflicting claims of law and grace. Hence arise two different modes of solving the great problem

of religion—how man may have peace with God. The one, unable to reconcile these conflicting authorities, has followed the stronger impulse of human nature—the hope of mercy; and simply ignored the sentence and threats of the judge within the breast. This is the plan of irreligion, which hopes vaguely for pardon, and turns a deaf ear to the whispers of guilt. Such too is the method of some systems of religion, which would teach us simply to disregard any difficulties which may seem to hinder the assurance of immediate acceptance by God. Such among heathens was the system of Buddhism; which taught man to endeavour to make himself perfect, without sacrifice, or atonement, or any recognition of guilt³. Such, among professing Christians, is the teaching of the Socinian, who recognises no obstacles raised by the Divine government to the impunity of sinners who repent. He wants not to receive Christ as his Atonement, and therefore he will not place himself under the teaching of those schoolmasters—the law without the sense of guilt within—which might drive him to “wash his robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Such too, in some measure, is the teaching of certain divines in our own Church; who regard the barrier raised by the sense of guilt between man and God, as a delusion of the wicked one, which it is the part of true wisdom to disregard⁴.

Against all these systems, as conflicting with human nature, every sacrifice which has been offered,

³ See NOTE 24.

⁴ See NOTE 55.

even in the darkness of heathenism, has borne its testimony. Still more the sacrifices, which were offered by God's appointment, bore witness that "without shedding of blood was no remission." But far above these obscurer lights shines the brightness of the cross of Christ—revealing, in characters which cannot be mistaken, the universal law of the Divine government—that sin must be either punished or expiated; and that in sacrifice alone the conflicting claims of law and grace—of conscience condemning, and hope acquitting—are harmoniously adjusted. The two opposing impulses of our higher nature find their satisfaction in the Atonement, and in it alone; because it recognises the righteous claims of a violated law, and, at the same time, the boundless mercy of a loving God. Conscience is not blunted or outraged; because the expiation confirms its testimony to the guilt of sin, and the tremendous punishment which it deserved; and yet all our desires of happiness and communion with God are also satisfied by the "exceeding riches of his grace".⁵ The power of the Atonement lies in its appeal to all the parts of our complex nature which have regard to religion, and not to one or two only; and, in part, to its awakening feelings, which, in our present degraded state, might for ever slumber, did not the power of Divine grace, and the preaching of the cross, wake them from their secret recesses, and make their possessor for the first time conscious of their existence. And these feelings

⁵ Eph. ii. 7, and i. 7.

have their source in the very depths of our being—in the *consciousness of sin*—the *sense of guilt*—the *fear of punishment*—the *hope of forgiveness*—as well as in the *intense reciprocation of a perfect love*: and these all twine in one indissoluble chain, to draw the penitent to the cross of Christ. In it all parts of man's religious nature find their appropriate object, instead of one being satisfied at the expense of another. And thus it happens that we witness in those who "live by the faith of the Son of God," that harmony of their inner nature which might have been pronounced impossible, prior to our experience of its reality. *We see the sensitiveness of conscience*—the keenness of its perception of demerit—*growing side by side with that triumphant assurance of safety*, which makes his salvation almost a present possession to the child of God. The opposite parts of his spiritual nature (which, like the Law and the Gospel, seemed at first to rend asunder his very being by their discordant impulses) are found to move in lines steadily converging to that point, where—in the glory of a more perfect state—the threats of law and the hopes of pardon shall alike disappear in the light of God's presence, and "love" shall be "the fulfilling of the law".

To sum up what I have said: the Atonement meets the several wants of our spiritual nature, and is felt to harmonize God's justice and love in this sense—that it evidently implies an exercise of both these

⁶ Gal. ii. 20.

⁷ Rom. xiii. 10.

attributes. That it evinces his love, none can doubt. We may confidently point to the cross of Christ as the strongest proof of Divine love. The Father "loved" us, for "he gave his only begotten Son^a." The Son loved us, for "greater love hath no man than "this, that a man lay down his life for his friends^b." Again, we may point to the cross as upholding the rigour of God's law, and furnishing a measure of the hatefulness of sin. In the greatness of the Atonement, which even gratuitous mercy could not dispense with, we learn the extent of the outrage on God's creation which sin had inflicted, and the majesty of the Divine law. Whether God punishes sin, or commutes punishment into atonement, in either case it is an exercise of that justice—that righteous government—which has ever demanded this alternative. These lessons are taught by the cross, if it teaches any thing; and it was doubtless meant that we should read them there. But if we suppose these lessons to include the whole purpose of the Atonement—all the objects for which Christ suffered and died,—we are mistaking the beams which reach our own eyes for the whole light of the sun, a few partial glimpses for a complete view of infinite truth.

Let us be content with that which we are permitted to know, without seeking to make our knowledge the measure of truth itself. Let us be satisfied with feeling the adaptation of the Atonement to our spiritual wants; its capacity to harmonize the conflicting ele-

^a John iii. 16.

^b John xv. 13.

ments of our being. If it thus appears to unite the Divine attributes of justice and mercy, so far as to include the exercise of both¹; and if it gives to each part of our moral nature its suitable object and sustenance, this is all, if not more, than we have any right to demand. We may leave to higher intelligences, or a more perfect state, to show the meeting-point of these several truths in the plan of the universe, and the nature of the Triune Jehovah.

¹ See NOTE 58.

NOTES.

NOTE 1, p. 5.

"It is in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that this reflection of the New Testament in the Old is most distinctly brought before us. There the temple, the priest, the sacrifices, the altar, the persons of Jewish history are the figures of Christ and the Church. In the Epistles of St. Paul it is the rarity rather than the frequency of such images which is striking. It is the opposition, and not the identification of the Law and the Gospel which is the leading thought of his mind. But in the Epistle to the Hebrews they are fused in one; the New Testament is hidden in the Old, the Old revealed in the New. And from this source, and not from the Epistles of St. Paul, the language of which we are speaking has passed in the theology of modern times. While few persons, comparatively speaking, have ever understood the relation of the law and faith in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews is familiar to all."

THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS, GALATIANS, ROMANS: with Critical Notes and Dissertations. By BENJAMIN JOWETT, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College, Oxford. London, John Murray, 1855 (vol. ii. p. 476).

NOTE 2, p. 6.

I have purposely avoided giving any opinion, or resting any conclusion upon the Pauline origin of the Epistle to the Hebrews. I am inclined to believe that its teaching originally came from

Paul, and that it was sent to the Eastern Churches with the sanction of his name; but that the actual composition was the work of one of his companions, probably St. Luke. Its canonical authority does not depend upon the name of the actual writer.

NOTE 3, p. 15.

See Dean Graves's invaluable Lectures on the Pentateuch. In Part II. Lecture III., on the *penal code of the Jewish Law*, he thus justifies the capital punishment of idolaters:—

"Every act of idolatry was not only an apostasy from true religion, but an act of TREASON AGAINST THE STATE, a breach of that original contract and charter, on which the Jewish constitution was founded, and on which the national property and privileges depended; and, therefore, according to the principles of every established government in the world, merited and received capital punishment" (p. 150, 1).

NOTE 4, p. 17.

In this statement Mr. Thompson adheres closely to the language of Hengstenberg, quoted by him in his 38th note.

"The legal sacrifices, though *merely symbolical in reference to acceptance with God*, were strictly vicarious, and possessed a real efficacy with respect to the outward theocracy."

This is exactly the view which I have advocated, but I doubt whether Hengstenberg's statements elsewhere are perfectly consistent with it.

NOTE 5, p. 18.

In Lecture I. (as preached) I took no notice of this *qualifying* statement, as I scarcely considered it to be a part of Archbishop Magee's view of the Levitical sacrifices. I regarded it rather as an *obiter dictum*, put in to guard against the appearance of contradiction between his view of the Levitical sacrifices, and his theory of the propitiatory efficacy of primitive sacrifice. As I designedly avoided touching on the question of primitive sacrifice, I took no notice of that part of Magee's statement which had reference to it.

Finding, however, that I was conceived by some to have misrepresented the Archbishop's opinions; and finding, moreover, that it was almost impossible to get any one to discuss the efficacy

of sacrifice under the law, apart from their opinions about sacrifice antecedent to the law, I have altered this part of the Lecture, and so far departed from my original plan, as to discuss not only this statement of Magee's, but also (Appendix to Lecture I.) the whole question of the bearing of primitive sacrifice on our interpretation of the Mosaic law.

NOTE 6, p. 18.

Mr. Litton, whose opinion on this point does not differ materially from Magee's, expresses himself more cautiously. He says:—

"The *expressed* benefit could, of course, only be temporal in character, since the sanctions of the law itself were but temporal."

* * * * *

"But this does not preclude us from supposing that a further efficacy, *unrevealed*, MAY have attached to the Mosaic atonements; and that, by virtue of their being substitutes for the one great sacrifice of the Christian covenant, they MAY have availed, when offered in penitence and faith, to avert the eternal consequences of sin." (Litton's Bampton Lectures, p. 343.)

Observe, he uses *may* instead of Magee's *must*; and he admits that this further efficacy was *unrevealed*, while Magee seems to assert that it was revealed, not indeed in the law, but before the law. In truth, Mr. Litton's statement concedes all I want; for my inquiry is not into the *possible unrevealed* effects of any Divine institution, but into the revealed efficacy and design of sacrifice.

NOTE 7, p. 22.

Mr. Jowett enumerates (vol. ii. p. 470) the leading images under which Christ's work is described (whether as a sacrifice, or redemption, or ransom), and then explains the growth of the doctrines which he denies, out of these materials, by saying, that "upon this figurative or typical statement of the doctrine of the Atonement is raised a further logical one." He applies Selden's celebrated *dictum* about transubstantiation to the doctrine of the Atonement, saying, "*Rhetoric becomes logic* as the age becomes logical rather than rhetorical."

That this is true, as a general statement, I fully admit; and I have myself endeavoured to show its applicability (see Lecture

IV.) to the *satisfaction* theories of the Atonement, which had their origin in the logical expansion of figurative terms by the Schoolmen. But I have elsewhere (especially in the Appendix to Lecture IV.) endeavoured to guard against Mr. Jowett's misapplication of the principle to some of the most definite statements of Scripture.

NOTE 8, p. 28.

Fairbairn's opinion on this point is substantially the same as Magee's. He says (Typology, vol. ii. p. 334):—

"In so far as the ancient believer might present the blood of his sacrifice according to the manner prescribed, and in so far as the believer now appropriates by faith the atoning blood of Christ, in each case alike the blessed result is—he is *justified from sin*, and has *peace with God*."

The words "*justified from sin*" and "*peace with God*" seem exactly to denote what Magee calls "*spiritual remission and acceptance*." It is worth observing that the parallel here drawn by Fairbairn between the effects of the blood of the animal sacrifice and of the blood of Christ is very unlike, if not directly contradictory, to that drawn by the Apostle in the words of the text of Lecture I. (Heb. ix. 13, 14).

NOTE 9, p. 28.

When I say that Magee attributes a higher, but *uncovenanted* efficacy to the Mosaic sacrifices, I mean that he distinctly admits that this efficacy was uncovenanted by the law itself. He would, doubtless, maintain that all sacrifice owed its spiritual efficacy to a covenant coeval with the fall, which the law of Moses could neither annul nor supersede.

NOTE 10, p. 29.

I have carefully avoided giving an opinion on this point, but have argued throughout on the supposition that the view adopted by Magee, Fairbairn, and Litton, is the true one. The argument against the spiritual efficacy of the Mosaic sacrifices would be stronger on a different hypothesis. Outram does not directly argue the question; but I have little doubt that he considered that there were very many transgressions which could not be classed as done either *ignorantly* or *presumptuously*. Thus, while

using most elaborate arguments (cap. xiii. § 6) to show that the sins of false swearing and fraud, for which a trespass-offering was prescribed (Lev. vi. 2—6), were not *presumptuous*, he also shows that they were done designedly, and did not belong to the class called sins of ignorance (§ 3. 7).

The safest course, where there is so much doubt, is to avoid making either conclusion the basis of argument.

NOTE 11, p. 36.

THE SACRIFICES OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

Nothing can be more comprehensive than the confession of sin made by the High Priest over the head of the scapegoat (Lev. xvi. 21); and we must suppose that all the offences so confessed were the subject of the annual expiation (Lev. xvi. 30). Consequently this confession has often been appealed to as proving the wide application of the legal sacrifices. On the other hand, nothing can be more sweeping than the repeated assertions in the Epistle to the Hebrews that these sacrifices could not "take away sins." The difficulty is removed completely by supposing that the annual sacrifices had respect merely to the outward defilement communicated, by the sins then confessed, to the whole congregation. These offences were remitted as regarded their ceremonial defilement, and their interference with the visible bond of a national covenant. As regarded their spiritual wickedness, they were not and could not be expiated by such means. Viewed in this light, the confession of the priest was a mere calling to remembrance of sin—*ἀνάμνησις ἁμαριῶν* as the Apostle calls it (Heb. x. 3).

As an instance of the defilement which individual transgression communicated to the congregation, we may adduce the expiation commanded for an uncertain murder, the result of which is described (Deut. xxi. 8), not as the pardon of the offender, but as the pardon of the congregation. Similarly the presence of one who had touched a dead body, and not been afterwards purified, is spoken of as defiling the "tabernacle" and "the sanctuary of the Lord" (Numb. xix. 13—20); and it was to purify from this uncleanness that the ashes of the red heifer were set apart. This ordinance, twice expressly called a *sin-offering* (תִּנְחֹם, v. 9 and 17), or, as it is in the E. V., a "purification for sin," is classed by

some with public sacrifices (see Outram, lib. i. cap. xiv. § 8). These considerations greatly enhance the propriety of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews classing the "ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean" with the "blood of bulls and of goats" shed on the annual day of expiation. Both applied to external defilement and ceremonial unfitness for the public service of God. Both belonged rather to the purifying of the sanctuary and the congregation, than to the acquittal of the individual. Both were for the purification of sin in its public ceremonial aspect: both were equally powerless to cleanse from moral guilt.

And here we may remark, that the beautiful symbolic ceremony of the scapegoat, peculiar to the Day of Atonement, harmonizes perfectly with the external political character of the atonement, whose effects it represented. For, when the High Priest had made a full confession of "the iniquities of the children of Israel" (Lev. xvi. 21),—those iniquities which in their deeper guilt the blood of bulls and goats was unable to take away (Heb. x. 4),—he sent away the goat with its symbolic load "into a land not inhabited" (Lev. xvi. 22)—from the national limits of the Jewish polity, from the cognizance of the Mosaic law, into the domains of nature, no longer visible to the eye of the Jewish magistrate, but still before the face of Him from whose presence nothing can flee. The ceremony of the scapegoat was only the *excommunication* of the victim who bore the "iniquities of the children of Israel." Imagination has sometimes been busy with fancying the scapegoat in the wilderness perishing miserably under the wrath of heaven, or given over (according to one interpretation of *azazel*) to be tormented by the evil one. But such fancies are not only unwarranted, but inconsistent with the position of the ceremony in a temporal dispensation. The scapegoat was not to bear the load of real guilt, and to suffer its penalty instead of the transgressors; its office was simply to represent their acquittal in the eye of the law, by transporting their misdeeds beyond its jurisdiction. The symbol was complete when the goat had reached the "land not inhabited;" and the introduction of any thing further would only spoil its emblematic beauty and perfection.

Dr. Hawkins's view of the annual sacrifices closely resembles that given above. He says, the sacrifices "which did refer to "moral guilt, as" those "on the great Day of Atonement, did not

“procure remission, but *only so far put away sin as to hallow the sinner’s worship*, and permit him to approach the presence of “the Holy God, and not die.” (Discourses by Rev. E. Hawkins, Provost of Oriel, on the Historical Scriptures of the Old Testament, 1833, Discourse VI. p. 151.)

Similarly Mr. Veysie speaks of the day of expiation as *an annual renewal of the covenant* between God and his people. See Veysie’s Bampton Lectures for 1795, Sermon III. p. 65.

NOTE 12, p. 41.

For this view of primitive sacrifice, which is not that commonly taken, I am glad to be able to quote the high authority of the learned Dr. Hawkins. He says (in the same work which I have quoted in the preceding note), “I do not here assume that the *primitive sacrifices were of Divine appointment, though I believe them to have been so*; much less that they *atoned for human guilt, which I apprehend they did not*. But if they were divinely instituted, they probably were intended to denote the guilt of “the worshipper, and to *procure for him, not indeed pardon for his sin, but acceptance for his worship*.” (Dr. Hawkins’s Discourses, &c., note to p. 63.)

Mr. Davison (Primitive Sacrifice) denies not only the expiatory power, but the Divine origin of primitive sacrifice. The fullest answer to him on this point is to be found in G. S. Faber’s Treatise on Expiatory Sacrifice.

NOTE 13, p. 41.

Magee applies the epithet “*sacramental*” (Discourse II. p. 38) to primitive sacrifice, without explaining its meaning, or justifying its use. I suppose he meant by calling it *sacramental*, that it was more than a bare sign or type of Christ’s sacrifice, that it was also an “*effectual sign*”—an instrument for conveying a spiritual benefit. But its being a “*standing memorial*” does not prove it to be *sacramental* in this sense.

NOTE 14, p. 47.

It is quite plain that neither the ashes of a heifer, nor the blood of the legal sacrifices, could have effected the external purification which the Apostle here ascribes to them; unless they had been

instituted by an authority co-ordinate with that of the law whose violations they were meant to atone for. The *natural* insufficiency of the instrument would have concluded equally against the power of the legal sacrifices to *purify the flesh*, as against their power to *take away sin*. So far, therefore, as the analogy of the legal sacrifices throws light on the conditions requisite for purging the conscience, it would lead us to expect that a sacrifice might be necessary, ordained by Him who planted conscience in the breast; and who alone can declare, by an authority superior to conscience itself, on what conditions its threats may be abrogated. And if, for the purifying of the flesh, a rite was ordained which seemed to have no natural efficacy for such a purpose, still less can we expect to discern the *natural* fitness of a greater sacrifice to cleanse the conscience; as the system of government to which the latter has reference, lies for the most part beyond the horizon of human knowledge, and the cognizance of human experience.

NOTE 15, p. 51.

When I say that "there the requirements of the law ceased," I do not, of course, mean that the law did not enjoin piety to priest and worshipper. It demanded it, and left it to the Supreme Judge of hearts to punish the want of it. What I mean to say is no more than this—that for the promised efficacy of a particular sacrifice, piety in either priest or worshipper was not required. Indeed this follows as a matter of course, if the sacrifice affected only the external relations of the worshipper to a visible polity.

NOTE 16, p. 51.

The efficacy here attributed to the Mosaic sacrifices, "in virtue of mere ritual exactness," is different from the efficacy attributed to the sacraments *ex opere operato* by the Church of Rome. The Mosaic sacrifices as external rites possessed only an efficacy for external sanctification—"the purifying of the flesh;" the sacraments are supposed (when efficacious *ex opere operato*) by the external act to confer an internal grace, and imprint a *character* upon the soul.

NOTE 17, p. 51.

Nothing can be more correct than the Apostle's classification, in thus assigning to Christ's filial obedience a place in the Christian

dispensation corresponding to that of the ritual sacrifice in the Mosaic economy. *However different in themselves, they occupied precisely similar places*; and to have altered the parallel (as by comparing the spirit of Christ to the piety, or want of piety of the Jewish worshipper) would have been to compare what was part of the objective atonement in one system with that which was subjective in the other. For that self-sacrificing spirit which found expression in the words, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," no less than his crucifixion or ascension, was part of Christ's mediation—of the work which He wrought on behalf of man; and which, though subjective to Him, was objective to those for whose benefit it was manifested.

If the submissive obedience of Christ had any type in the Mosaic worship, it was in the unresisting spirit of the innocent victim: a comparison which seems implied in the words of the Prophet:—"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a "lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth." (Isa. liii. 7, and Acts viii. 32.)

NOTE 18, p. 57.

Of this tendency we have an example in a passage of Maimonides, quoted by Magee (end of his 37th note); in which he represents the scapegoat as expiating *presumptuous sins*.

NOTE 19, p. 58.

It is particularly necessary to observe, that the Apostle puts forward Christ's moral obedience and other excellencies, not as constituting his atoning sacrifice, but as giving, in part at least, its efficacy to that sacrifice. The text of Lecture II. (Heb. x. 8—10) is frequently appealed to as giving the Apostle's theory of sacrifice; as in a recent work of Mr. Campbell (*Nature of the Atonement*, p. 123), and in Mr. Davies's able pamphlet, *St. Paul and Modern Thought* (p. 72). But were Christ's sufferings and death efficacious only as the external manifestation of this spirit of obedience? *Would this obedience have been equally efficacious, if manifested with equal clearness in some other way?* To assert that it would, is to alter the whole bearing of the Apostle's reasoning; which was meant to show, *not* why sacrifice was efficacious, but how Christ's offering was intrinsically nobler than any

other. That his sufferings and death should have manifested his obedience to the Father, and his love to us, was not necessarily the only thing which gave them their atoning power. It is all along presupposed that *the mode of their manifestation*—through the sacrifice of the incarnate Son of God—was indispensable; and even in this passage, after naming the will of the Father, and Christ's doing that will, as the distinguishing excellence of the Christian sacrifice, and saying that by that will of God we are sanctified, he adds, "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

The attentive reader will easily perceive that the question here raised about the value of Christ's sacrifice, namely, whether it was efficacious merely by being (as it certainly was) the external proof of filial obedience, or whether it had a further efficacy in consequence of the relation which his sufferings and death bore to the Divine government and law, is an exact counterpart of the question raised by Bähr about the legal sacrifices—viz., whether they were merely the outward expression of the piety of the worshipper, or whether they were also necessary as discharging certain functions in relation to a system of government. On these points I have maintained (see Appendix to Lecture III.), that the sacrifice served both ends, and not one only.

I have purposely pushed the text, as far as possible, in the direction of those who make atonement to consist in the manifestation of obedience; in order to show that, even when so pushed, it does warrant the conclusions which have been derived from it.

NOTE 20, p. 66.

We should remember that the very words by which Christ's sacrifice is described in the New Testament (e.g. *θυσία, προσφορά, ιλασμός, ιλάσκεσθαι*), are borrowed from the sacrificial rites of the Greeks. How difficult would the preaching of the Atonement have been to them, if the idea had been a novel one, and if their language consequently had no words to express it. If the preaching of the cross was "*foolishness*" to the Greek, it was not because its sacrificial aspect startled him; but because, through the association of such ideas with a debasing superstition, it had incurred the contempt of the philosopher. That the cross should have appeared to some to be *foolishness*, no more proves that

heathen sacrifice was no preparation for the teaching of the Gospel, than its being a *stumbling-block* to the Jews proves that their sacrifices were unfitted for the same purpose. Immeasurably inferior as the preparation made by the Gentile religions certainly was, it was so far a preparation, as to draw out certain religious ideas which have their root in man's spiritual nature, and which were capable afterwards of being separated from the vile superstitions with which they had been connected, and applied to more worthy objects. Their sacrifices thus prepared the way for the reception of the Gospel by the humble-minded heathen as well as Jew; while the self-sufficient rationalistic worshipper of human systems—whether of Jewish traditions or Greek philosophy—failed to discern the Divine message; even as such characters, in every country, have always done.

NOTE 21, p. 71.

The words "for the remission of sins" do not occur in the three other accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper. The whole clause "which is shed for many for the remission of sins," is omitted in St. Paul's account (1 Cor. xi. 25), while a portion only is preserved by St. Mark and St. Luke. This portion, however, though not containing the words *εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*, really implies the propitiatory object of Christ's blood-shedding; for St. Mark retains the words "which is shed for many" (*τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυνόμενον*), while St. Luke has the parallel expression "which is shed for you" (*τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυνόμενον*).

It cannot, therefore, be said with truth, that there is any real discrepancy between the accounts on this point; but only that the words, as recorded by St. Matthew, give fulness and clearness to the parallel passages in the other Evangelists, and declare explicitly, what was indeed sufficiently implied—that the benefit which Christ's blood-shedding procured *περὶ πολλῶν* and *ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν*, was remission of sins. In short, the expressions used by the Evangelists, though differing from one another in form, are all plainly equivalent to *περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν*, the usual phrase in the LXX for a *sin-offering*.

On the variations of the four accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper, the student will find some very valuable remarks

in Professor Reichel's Donnellan Lectures on "The Nature and Offices of the Church." (Lecture VI. p. 129.)

NOTE 22, p. 72.

Διαθήκη.

Nothing can be more confusing to an English reader than the wavering of our authorized version in the translation of *διαθήκη*. The description of Christ as the mediator of the new covenant, and his death as the sacrifice ratifying that covenant, occurs several times in almost the same words; yet the E. V. has *covenant* in one place, and *testament* in another. Thus in the words quoted in the Lecture from Heb. xiii. 20, and x. 29, and in Heb. viii. 6, where Christ is called *κρείττονος διαθήκης μεσίτης*, the translation is *covenant*; while in the nearly identical expression *κρείττονος διαθήκης ἑγγυος*, Heb. vii. 22, it is *testament*. Again in Heb. xii. 24, *διαθήκης νέας μεσίτη* is rendered the mediator of the *new covenant*; while the similar expression in ix. 15, *διαθήκης καινῆς μεσίτης*, is rendered mediator of the *new testament*.

I suppose that it is unnecessary to prove that in all these passages, and in the words of institution of the Lord's Supper, the translation *testament* is positively erroneous. Some, however, still cling to the meaning of *testament* as the only possible rendering of the very difficult passage Heb. ix. 16, 17, and follow the E. V. in rendering it "where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead." The difficulties, however, to which this meaning reduces those who adopt it, are exemplified in the E. V., which not only adopts the translation *testament* in ver. 15 (where it is plainly erroneous), but is forced to carry it on to ver. 20; thereby making Moses say in that place, "This *is the blood of the testament*, which God hath enjoined unto you," and in the passage from which it is quoted (Exod. xxiv. 8), "Behold *the blood of the covenant*, which the Lord hath made with you."

Whatever difficulties attach to the interpretations which retain the meaning *covenant* throughout the whole of this disputed passage, they are nothing compared to the difficulties which cling to every attempt to introduce the meaning *testament* at ver. 16. Tholuck and Ebrard, therefore, rightly insist on keeping the

meaning *covenant* throughout, though their interpretations differ in other respects.

Tholuck thus states the difficulties consequent on the interpretation *covenant* (which he approves of) in ver. 16: (1) “ὁ διαθέμενος” must, if that meaning be adopted, denote the *victim*. (2) ἐπὶ νεκροῖς it will be necessary to render by ‘*over, in the case of slain victims.*’ Both, certainly, present great difficulties. * * * *
“But, in so far as a victim ratifies the covenant, we say in German it (stiftet) *establishes* it; why then might not the author say the same thing in Greek? * * * * Ὁ νεκρός, in Greek, certainly denotes, when used as a substantive, only human dead, *corpses of men*. But why should we not take it as a neuter, making it denote carcases in general, whether of men or animals?”

Ebrard’s explanation meets these difficulties more satisfactorily. He thus states the meaning of ver. 16. “Where a sinful man will enter into covenant with the holy God, *the man must first die—must first atone for his guilt by a death (or he must produce a substitutionary burnt-offering).*” If the principles laid down in Appendix to Lecture III. (on the Symbolism of Sacrifice) be correct, this explanation is not so far-fetched as might at first sight be supposed. For the death of the victim was (symbolically) the death of the offerer, who in a covenant-sacrifice was ὁ διαθέμενος. Thus it might be said that it was necessary for the death of the party entering into covenant with God (τοῦ διαθεμένου) to take place symbolically. (Might not φέρεσθαι have the meaning of being publicly exhibited? Ebrard makes its proper meaning to be *afferri coram iudicibus*, and translates it to “be proven, authenticated.”) This explanation would obviate the necessity for applying νεκροῖς to *animal* victims, inasmuch as it belongs rather to the *men* whom they represented, *i.e.* to the offerers. In short, both διαθέμενος and νεκροῖς are used with the strictest propriety, if we consider them both as applied to the parties offering the covenant-sacrifice, and only mediately, or in a secondary manner, to the victims which represented them. The harshness of applying such expressions as ὁ διαθέμενος and νεκρός directly to an animal victim is very imperfectly accounted for by Tholuck. But the harshness almost entirely disappears, if we suppose this language to be applied, not to the victims themselves, but to those whom they symbolically represented. When, therefore, he speaks of the

necessity for the death of the party entering into covenant, he means only a symbolic representation of his death, which was regarded as a substitute for it, and after which the offerer is spoken of as *νεκρός*.

Another important difficulty is removed by Ebrard's remark, "that an atoning death is necessary, not to *every* covenant, but "only when a *sinner* will enter into covenant with *God*. But "this limitation, according to which it is only religio-theocratical "covenants that are here spoken of, is evident enough from the "context, ver. 15."

Whatever may be thought of this view (of the probability of which no one can fairly judge who has not studied attentively the symbolism of sacrifice), there are almost insuperable difficulties against adopting the meaning *testament* in this passage. We may therefore safely conclude that *διαθήκη* ought *always* to be translated *covenant* in the Apostolic writings.

NOTE 23, p. 79.

That the *giving of a life as a ransom* is the very essence of expiatory sacrifice, appears from Lev. xvii. 11. If, with most modern expositors, we follow Bähr's translation, the passage will run thus: "For the *soul* (נַפֶּשׁ) of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to atone for your souls, for the blood atones *through the soul* (בְּנַפֶּשׁ)." On this Fairbairn observes, "It is scarcely possible to mistake the general sense of this important passage; but its precise and definite meaning has been somewhat obscured, by not perceiving that the *soul* at the close of the verse refers back to the *soul* at the beginning, and expresses the principle or seat of life, not in him who is to be atoned for, but in the creature by which the atonement is made for him. And the full and correct import of the passage is to the following effect: 'You must not eat the blood, because God has appointed it as the means of atonement for your sins. But it is the means of atonement as the bearer of the soul. It is not, therefore, the matter of the blood that atones, but the soul or life which resides in it; so that the soul of the offered victim atones for the soul of the man who offers it.'" (Fairbairn's *Typology*, vol. ii. p. 285.)

NOTE 24, p. 90.

Of the fact here stated—that BUDDHISM is a religion without a sacrifice—there can be little doubt. But as the mention of *altars* and *offerings* in books treating of Buddhism might convey an opposite impression, it may be well to give some explanation of this language.

Huc in his "L'Empire Chinois" (Paris, 1854) gives an account of the Buddhist temple of Pou-tou, and says: "Devant chaque idole est un *autel*, recouvert de petits vases pour les *offrandes* et de cassolettes en bronze ciselé, où brûlent sans cesse des petits bâtons de parfums." (Vol. ii. p. 235.)

That these offerings ("offrandes") were not of a sacrificial character is plain enough from the whole description. But Spence, in his valuable work "Eastern Monachism" (London, 1850), explains precisely the nature of the offerings and the purpose of the altar. He says (p. 209), "Some *flowers* and a little *rice* are placed upon the altar." In his pamphlet on the "Idolatry of Ceylon" (p. 27) he describes a Buddhist festival, and speaks of the "necessary supplies, such as *rice, flowers, oil, &c.*" being paid for from the royal treasury.

But though the fact of this religion having no sacrifices is patent enough, it is not so easy to discover the connexion of this fact with the confused jumble of tenets, still so imperfectly investigated, which form the theology of Buddhism.

So far, however, as our knowledge of this system extends, no consciousness is apparent of any obstacle to the perfecting of the human spirit arising from sin. Guilt and fear of punishment, as distinct from liability to pain, are not the starting-points of the Buddhist's religion; and consequently expiation, which is the correlative of guilt, is not thought of. Hodgson, in his paper on Buddhism in the Transactions of the Asiatic Society (vol. ii. p. 254, Note 29), thus describes the esoteric doctrine of the Prajnikas: "Genuine *Buddhism never seems to contemplate any measures of acceptance with the Deity*; but overleaping the barrier between finite and infinite mind, urges its followers to *aspire, by their own efforts, to that Divine perfectibility, of which it teaches that man is capable, and by attaining which man becomes God.*"

True, this is *esoteric* doctrine; but it seems to be the legitimate conclusion from their other opinions.

For it may be doubted whether they truly believe in any real objective Deity. The state of *Nirvāna*, which they represent Buddha as having attained, seems to be at best a state of passive perfection, no longer connected with the world, undistinguishable, except by a subtle metaphysica, from actual *cessation of existence*, or *annihilation*. Spence says, "The Buddhists deny the existence of any such entity as Brahm. They are not pantheists, but "atheists." (Eastern Monachism, p. 307.)

To a similar passive state of repose (*Nirwāna*) the Buddhist saint aspires. He seeks only to be exempted from the never-ending succession of births, and consequent painful existence, to which he is naturally subject. Spence thus describes the ultimate object of his aspirations: "The Buddhist *does not seek for absorption, but annihilation*," (p. 308).

The difficulty of reconciling such a passive condition of the object of their worship with the efficacy of prayers and offerings, is conspicuous in the curious dialogue given by Spence, p. 228—232, where the efficacy claimed for them seems to be solely attributed to the reflex effect of such acts upon the offerer's own mind and condition; at least it is not attributed to the active interposition of the being who is worshipped. The legitimate conclusion from such atheistic tenets—that all acts of worship are superfluous—is probably not far from the *esoteric* teaching of the same religion, whose hierarchy, temples, prayers, and offerings, seem to be rather a concession to the religious instincts of the people, than a consistent part of a system whose highest teaching is scarcely distinguishable from atheism. Thus Spence says of the *esoteric* doctrine of the Prajnikas in a passage part of which we have already quoted: "Genuine" (I suppose he means *esoteric*) "Buddhism has no priesthood: the saint scorns the aid of mediators, whether on earth or in heaven." (Vol. ii. p. 254.)

Expiatory sacrifice was plainly superfluous under such a system. The case of Buddhism, therefore, strongly confirms the natural inference—that, where sacrifice prevailed, the idea attached to it was that of objective propitiation, of altering the relation between the worshipper and the being whom he worshipped.

If the reference of sacrifice had been merely subjective (as

Bähr and Maurice maintain), if it had been only the expression of internal feelings, it is hard to see how it would have been more out of place in Buddhism than gifts of rice and flowers. That this religion should have departed from the precedent of older religions, in adopting the offering of Cain in preference to that of Abel, is plainly not the result of mere accident or diversity of taste, but intimately connected with its doctrines about the nature of God, and the perfection of man.

NOTE 25, p. 92.

"The use of sacrifice must be accepted as a fact; and it proves at least this much, that men believed they could find help from external means in drawing closer their relation to the Divine Power. And the ethical objection so often urged against this truth—that one's own sins are not transferable either in their guilt or their punishment, because the simplest natural justice requires that the sinner alone should bear his own burden, and the righteous man wear his own crown—is so obvious, that we must believe it was known to the Greek or Roman who brought his costly victim to Zeus or Diana, as clearly as to the philosopher of modern days. The fact that, in the face of that natural law—the soul that sinneth *it* shall die—every nation visited death upon sinless victims, in order to expiate its own transgressions, will be taken by any candid person as a sign that the principle of sacrifice has a stronger hold on the human mind than that of simple retribution." (Thompson's Bampton Lectures, Lecture II. p. 31, 32.)

NOTE 26, p. 98.

Of this tendency to replace the living victim by a less costly and less cruel offering Mr. Thompson gives many proofs in his 37th note. He thus states the conclusion deducible from these proofs:

"Instead of the symbol rising in course of time to a reality, we have clear traces of the reverse process. The prodigality of sacrifices was retrenched, and the cheaper symbol substituted; the waxen image took the place of the man; the figure of rushes was thrown into the Tiber instead of the breathing victim; and the image of a bull made of meal or wood relieved

"the worshippers of the more expensive offering it represented." (Thompson, Lecture II. p. 52.)

The same tendency appears in what Tertullian tells us, that, from the times of falling heathenism, the least valuable parts were chosen for sacrifice. See Tholuck on Hebrews, vol. ii. p. 251 (Biblical Cabinet).

It is to be regretted that Mr. Thompson has expressed himself with so much indecision on the symbolic meaning of sacrifice. He seems, at least in one passage, to vacillate between Bähr's view and the older theories, and says (p. 69), "It would hardly become one who had not made this difficult subject his peculiar study, to arbitrate between two views with which *great names* are associated." So far as he does express an opinion it is in favour of the views which I have advocated in Appendix to Lecture III.; but he no where warns his readers against the danger of taking Bähr's theory as their key to unlock the difficulties of ancient sacrifice.

Probably to this hesitation, on a point of such importance, is due the commendation which Mr. Maurice bestows upon Thompson's Bampton Lectures in a note at the conclusion of his work on the Doctrine of Sacrifice (p. 322).

NOTE 27, p. 120.

We may perhaps make this distinction between the words *redeeming* and *buying*. When *redemption* is spoken of, a price is supposed to be given to set free those who have been slaves; but in such passages as "ye are not your own, ye are *bought* with a price," and "denying the Lord that *bought* them," men are regarded, not as having been set free by the payment of a ransom, but as having been purchased for the service of a new master. It is easy to see how closely these ideas are allied. To be *bought* by a master, "whose service is perfect freedom," is in fact to be *redeemed*. Still, the adoption of these two figures almost indifferently in Scripture is itself a warning not to apply either of them too literally to the work of Christ.

NOTE 28, p. 121.

A similar use of the word *ransom* occurs in Exod. xxi. 30, where it is applied to the price paid to redeem a forfeited life. When

an "ox gored a person so that he died," the life of the animal was forfeited. But sometimes a fine was laid on the owner instead, by which he redeemed his ox; and this was called "the ransom of his life" (LXX *λύτρα*), which was paid to the representatives of the deceased.

NOTE 29, p. 125.

ἀντί. ὑπέρ. περί.

That the preposition *ἀντί* denotes exchange or substitution is not denied (as in Matt. v. 38, Ὁφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ); but it is applied to Christ's work only in Matt. xx. 28 (and the parallel passage in Mark), where it is combined with the figure of money payment. I have treated it in that passage as strengthening, but not as adding to the usual signification of *λύτρον*, as in 1 Tim. ii. 6, where the compound *ἀντίλυτρον* is generally regarded as equivalent to the simple *λύτρον*.

The prepositions *ὑπέρ* and *περί* are, on the other hand, *frequently* used in a similar collocation in the New Testament; and as their signification is a matter of great importance, and has given rise to many disputes, the following remarks from the pen of an eminent modern critic, Mr. Ellicott, are deserving of attention. In commenting on Gal. iii. 13, p. 44, he says:

"The meaning of *ὑπέρ*, in this and similar passages, has been 'the subject of much controversy. Is it '*in commodum (alicujus)*,' or '*in loco (alicujus)*?' The following seems the most simple answer. Ὑπέρ, in its ethical sense, has principally and primarily the first meaning, especially in doctrinal passages, where the atoning death of Christ is alluded to, *e.g.* 2 Cor. v. 21, τὸν μὴ γινόντα ἁμαρτίαν, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν. But as there are general passages in the New Testament where *ὑπέρ* has eminently the second meaning, *e.g.* Philem. 13, ἵνα ὑπὲρ σοῦ μοι διακονῇ (comp. Plato, *Gorg.* 515 c, ἐγὼ ὑπὲρ σοῦ ἀποκρινοῦμαι); so also in these doctrinal passages *ὑπέρ* may admit the second meaning *united* with the first, where the context (*e.g.* in 1 Cor. xv. 3 it would be inadmissible) and nature of the argument seem to require it, though probably never the second exclusively."

In p. 3 he says, "Strictly speaking, *ὑπέρ*, in its ethical sense, retains some traces of its local meaning, 'bending over to pro-

"tect," e.g. μάχεσθαι ὑπέρ τινος; and thus points more immediately to the action than to the object or circumstance from which the action is supposed to spring. The latter relation is more correctly defined by περί, e.g. φοβεῖσθαι περί τινος. Περὶ will thus be more naturally used with the thing, 'sins;' ὑπέρ with the person, 'sinners;' and this with a few exceptions (e.g. 1 Cor. xv. 8, Heb. v. 8) appears the usage of the New Testament: comp. 1 Pet. iii. 18, where both forms occur. Still it is certain that the exact distinction between these prepositions is lost sight of even in classical writers." (Ellicott's Commentary on the Galatians, p. 8 and 44.)

NOTE 30, p. 129.

Hagenbach, on whom I have mainly relied for the facts and dates here given, quotes no writer as holding the doctrine of a deceit practised on Satan later than John Damascenus, who wrote in the eighth century. He is one of those who compare Christ's human nature to a bait. He says, ὁ θάνατος κατακτών τὸ σῶματος δέλεαρ τῇ τῆς θεότητος ἀγκίστρῃ περιπίπτειται. (Hagenbach's History of Doctrines, vol. ii. § 180.)

The doctrine must, however, have held its ground to a much later period. Anselm, though he did not argue expressly against it, attacked the notion which lies at the root of it, namely, that Satan had a *lawful* power over man, which entitled him to a ransom for his release. The title of the section in which he discusses this is, "Quod nullam diabolus habebat justitiam adversus hominem, et quare videatur habuisse, et cur Deus hoc modo hominem liberaverit." ("Cur Deus Homo," lib. i. § 7.) He thus states the opinion which he opposes: "Sed et illud quod dicere solemus, Deum scilicet debuisse prius per justitiam contra diabolum agere, quam per fortitudinem, ut cum diabolus eum, in quo nulla mortis erat causa et qui Deus erat, occideret, juste potestatem quam super peccatores habebat, amitteret, alioquin injustam violentiam fecisset illi, quoniam juste possidebat hominem, quem non ipse violenter attraxerat, sed idem homo se sponte ad illum contulerat: non video, quam vim habeat."

Against this idea he argues forcibly and conclusively, but I cannot find any more direct allusion than this to the redemption theory of the earlier Fathers. The following sentence from the

interesting preface of Hugo Laemmer, to a recent edition of the "Cur Deus Homo" (Berlin, 1857), would lead the reader to expect a direct discussion of the redemption theory in Anselm's work:—

"Argumentationibus istorum, qui tam diabolum per lignum in paradiso victorem aliquam in possidendo homine justitiam mortisque imperium habuisse defenderunt, quam eundem corpore Domini in mortem rapto *hami divinitatis in eo inclusi imprudentem esse devictum illudumque* censuerunt,—prorsus dubitavit album adjicere calculum." (Præfatio Editoris, p. viii.)

No doubt Anselm dissented from the opinions here mentioned, but I cannot find that he directly discusses them any where in his treatise. I am inclined, therefore, to think that the notion of Christ's human nature having been a bait to ensnare Satan, had almost died out before Anselm's time, or at least was held in a less offensive shape. Laemmer fixes the date of the circulation of the first book of the "Cur Deus Homo" at A.D. 1094. The second book did not appear till A.D. 1104.

NOTE 31, p. 131.

On this whole subject—the strange theory of redemption held by many of the Fathers—the student may consult Hagenbach's History of Doctrines, vol. i. § 68, and 134; and Thompson's Bampton Lectures, Notes 82, 83, 84. As there can be no doubt about the truth of the facts above stated, I have not thought it necessary to give numerous quotations.

NOTE 32, p. 131.

Lest any should form their estimate of the general teaching of the Fathers, on the subject of redemption, from the absurd theory into which some of them were led by their anxiety to supply an explanation of admitted truths, I gladly avail myself of the following testimony to the character of their teaching:—

"In accordance with the doctrine preached by the Apostles, the sufferings and death of Christ were from the commencement thought to be of principal importance in the work of redemption. The Fathers of the primitive Church regarded his death as a sacrifice and ransom (*λύτρον*), and therefore ascribed to his blood the power of cleansing from sin and guilt, and attached a high importance, sometimes even a supernatural

" efficacy, to the sign of the cross. They did not, however, rest
 " satisfied with vague and indefinite ideas, but in connexion with
 " the prevailing notions of the age, they further developed the
 " above doctrine, and represented the death of Christ as the
 " actual victory over the devil, the restoration of the Divine
 " image, and the source and condition of all happiness. But *how-*
 " *ever decidedly and victoriously this enthusiastic faith in the*
 " *power of the Redeemer's death manifested itself in the writings*
 " *and lives of the Fathers*, as well as in the persecutions and death
 " of so many Christians, yet that *theory of satisfaction* had not
 " then been formed, which represents Christ as *satisfying* the
 " justice of God by suffering in the room of the sinner the punish-
 " ment due to him. The term *satisfactio* occurs, indeed, in the
 " writings of Tertullian, but in a sense essentially different from,
 " and even opposed to, the idea of a sacrifice made by a substi-
 " tute." (Hagenbach's History of Doctrines, § 68, vol. i. p.
 172, 8.)

NOTE 33, p. 132.

Tertullian " applies the term *satisfacere* to such as make amends
 " for their own sins by confession and repentance, which shows
 " itself by works; but he never understands by it *satisfactio*
 " *vicaria* in the sense which was afterwards attached to it."
 (Hagenbach, vol. i. p. 177, § 68.)

He says, of a later period in the Church's history, " The notion
 " of a debt paid to God, which was first propounded by Athanasius,
 " gained increasingly ground." (Vol. i. p. 351, § 134.) It did
 not, however, assume the dimensions of a theory of redemption,
 till Nicholas of Methone in the Eastern Church, and ANSELM in
 the Western (he was Archbishop of Canterbury at the opening of
 the 12th century), independently of one another, and almost
 simultaneously, taught the theory of satisfaction; and inferred
 " the plan of redemption, with logical necessity, from certain
 " Divine and human relations." See Hagenbach, vol. ii. p. 32,
 § 180.

NOTE 34, p. 133.

" The system of Anselm, thus imperfectly sketched, differs from
 " the theory of satisfaction prevalent among later theologians in
 " one important respect. Here *satisfaction* is distinct from pun-

" *ishment* ; the one being an obedience to God's commands, and
 " the other the consequence of disobedience. It was by obeying
 " for men, rather than by being punished for them, according to
 " Anselm, that our blessed Lord reconciled them to his Father.
 " He endured death rather as a consequence of his obedience
 " than an integral part of it : his unswerving determination to pur-
 " sue holiness led the Jews to conspire against Him and put Him
 " to death, but the holiness rather than the death was man's
 " justification. Thus the sufferings of our Lord occupy a lower
 " place in the scheme of redemption than they ought to do. But
 " Thomas Aquinas, who, in other respects, adopts the theory of
 " Anselm, has made much more prominent the punishment which
 " Christ bore for men. And in the distinction to which I alluded
 " before, between the active and passive obedience of Christ, or,
 " as it is sometimes said, between his satisfaction of the law and
 " of punishment, *the system, so amended, has passed into modern*
 " *theology.*" (Thompson, Lecture VI. p. 165, 6.)

Hagenbach says, " We should be careful not to confound the
 " theory of Anselm with its developments by later Protestant
 " theologians. On the question, whether the satisfaction referred
 " to by Anselm is, properly speaking, *not so much a suffering of*
 " *punishment, as merely an active rendering of obedience*, inas-
 " much as he makes a difference between punishment and satis-
 " faction (i. 15, 'necesse est, ut omne peccatum satisfactio *aut*
 " *pœna sequatur*'), see Baur, p. 183. Nevertheless, it is certain
 " that the satisfaction made by Christ, in the view of Anselm,
 " consisted, if not exclusively, at least principally, in submitting
 " to sufferings and death ; it cannot, therefore, be said with Baur,
 " *that the idea of a punishment, by which satisfaction is made,*
 " *and which is suffered in the room of another, does not occur in*
 " *the scheme of Anselm.* On the other hand, it must be admitted
 " that Anselm rests contented with the idea of suffering death : in
 " his writings nothing is said of the Redeemer being under the
 " burden of the *Divine wrath*, of his taking upon Him the tor-
 " ments of hell, or what is called the anguish of the soul, &c.
 " The chaste and noble, tragical style in which the subject in
 " question is discussed, forms a striking contrast with the weak
 " and whining, even sensuous theology of later ages." (Hagen-
 bach, vol. ii. p. 38, § 180.)

between Divine and human law in general, but between some of their details, in which we have no authority for the resemblance, except the application of the word *debt* to *sins*. In short, the analogy of human law helps us but a very little way towards understanding the mysteries of redemption, and will surely mislead us, if we push the comparison far. On the other hand, to discard the forensic view of satisfaction and justification, because it is grounded on the analogy of Divine and human law, is to discard the knowledge we possess, because it is necessarily defective.

For an instance of the misconceptions which have arisen about justification from following too closely the analogy of human codes of law, see O'Brien's (Bishop of Ossory's) Sermons on Justification. (Sermon III. p. 68—75.)

NOTE 39, p. 137.

Mr. Litton says of the word *satisfaction*: "The term may not be the most happy one that could have been chosen, and it may have given rise to unwise speculations; but penetrate beneath the surface, and you will find a solid foundation for the idea as applied to the Christian Atonement." (Lecture IV. p. 149.)

NOTE 40, p. 140.

It may be thought that in objecting to the theory of satisfaction, as having regard only to *acts*, and not to the *agents* themselves, I am confounding the objective atonement with the subjective appropriation of it by the agent himself. But this is not the case. The condition of the agent himself, not his acts merely, must be considered to be that with which the Divine law has to deal, whether for reward or punishment. To suppose it otherwise would be to lower the Divine law to the level of human codes, and to regard it as dealing only with sin in its external manifestations. If the Divine law only took cognizance, like human codes, of external acts; and if it only demanded the performance of these acts, not heeding from what motive or even by whom they were done; then indeed the Scholastic and Tridentine doctrine of satisfaction might explain *how* Christ satisfied the requirements of the Divine law. But that law, dealing, as it did, with sin and holiness—with purity and impurity of heart—must have

been shaped so as to dispense punishment and forgiveness according to the wickedness or holiness, not of the acts only, but of the being who acts. Hence Christ's work of redemption, however mysterious, seems to spring from a deep and intimate relationship to those whom He redeems. It is not only because He suffers what they ought to have suffered, or because He does what they ought to have done, that mercy has become possible; but because He, who suffered and did such things, bore some deep and mysterious relation to the spirits of those for whom He suffered and acted; so that every pang He felt, and every act He did, vibrated to the extremities of that body of which He is the head, and placed not their acts but the actors themselves in a new relation to the Divine government, and to the fountain of holiness and life.

Hence we may see the futility of those objections to the forensic view of justification, which are condensed in Mr. Jowett's words (vol. ii. p. 468), "Can He see us other than we really are? Can He impute to us what we never did?" Such objections only apply to that explanation of the doctrine of imputation, which represents God as arbitrarily transferring Christ's merits and sufferings to men; but not to that which represents such a transfer as the natural result of a real, not a fictitious, relation between Redeemer and redeemed. When we assert that "we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," we mean, that this forensic justification—this judicial acceptance—is not the consequence of our own personal holiness; nay, that it must precede the acquisition of any holiness; but we do not mean to assert that this justification is a mere arbitrary "seeing us other than we really are." On the contrary, *God regards us differently because we are different*; different (not indeed in the sight of man, for the change which has taken place has not yet made itself visible, but different) in the sight of Him who "weigheth the spirits"—who sees not only the external act, but the motive or disposition from which it springs, and even discerns those incipient changes of character and spiritual relationship, which, like the beginnings of his natural life, are as yet imperceptible to him who is the subject of them. God sees the believer no longer as an isolated sinner, but as a branch grafted on the tree of life—as once more in union with the source of holiness—as possessing a seed of life within, which, if not destroyed

before it reach maturity, will not only germinate, but ultimately bear those fruits of outward holiness, which He, to whom all things are present, already marks with his love and approbation.

NOTE 41, p. 142.

It is hard to estimate the extent to which the Scholastic idea of satisfaction has tinged the speculations of our ablest divines. Thus, to take an instance from the writings of one whose name can never be mentioned without the profoundest respect, William Archer Butler thus infers the necessity for Christ's being Himself God, that He might make satisfaction for man.

"I affirm that reason replies, that every scheme, which does not suppose the Being who suffered actually identical with the Being whose justice demanded the sacrifice, and whom we call by the holy name of *God*, *defeats the notion of satisfaction*. * * *

"To state the case in the briefest form :—Such a Being must have been greater than God, or equal with God, or inferior to God, or, finally, God Himself.

"The two first suppositions need not detain us. They are easily shown to be self-contradictory, and will not be maintained by any adversaries with whom the truth of God has to contest. We arrive at the third possible supposition, that which pronounces the law satisfied by the punishment of one *Himself the bounden subject* of the law,—of a law which, in its evangelical promulgation, commands *every man* to be ready to 'lay down his life for the brethren.' Now if such be the nature, and such the extent of the law of God, that all works of supererogation are manifestly impossible, and that of every creature, the lowest not more than the highest, it may with equal truth be said that, after he has done all that he ever did or could perform, whether for himself or *others*, he is still but the performer of his duty,—it seems necessarily to follow, that, though we regard the work of Christ under its most exalted aspect, it was, were Christ simply a creature, no more than a realization of that universal law of love under which every created being is bound, and consequently could have no propitiatory influence beyond his own person; in other words, that *even* He fulfilled but his duty as a creature, when He 'did to others as He would 'they had done for Him.' This argument is equally applicable

“ through every stage of created being, unless creation be wider than the sovereignty of its Creator's law. The propitiatory virtue of Christ's sacrifice must, therefore, rest altogether upon the dignity of his person, and no dignity can cover the conditions of the question, until we reach *that one Being*, over whom is no superior, and to whom the conception of duty to any object above Himself ceases to be applicable. Our fourth supposition now emerges, and the sacrificing priest of the New Testament is discovered to be *ONE* with the everlasting God.” (Sermons by Rev. William Archer Butler, edited by Rev. Thos. Woodward, Dublin, 1849, Sermon XVIII. p. 330.)

I have not quoted this passage for the purpose of questioning the truth which it was meant to prove, and which I believe on other grounds; but in order to point out the extreme danger of such modes of reasoning, which assume, as premises, propositions quite as doubtful as those which it is proposed to deduce from them. This argument assumes throughout that the manner in which satisfaction must be made to the Divine law is clearly understood; and it is assumed to rest, not on principles deduced from the Divinely appointed sacrifices of the Mosaic law, nor from any thing stated in Scripture, but on the principles of “commutative or commercial justice” (as it has been called)—principles which were never applied by the Apostles, nor by any one for a thousand years after their time, to explain the efficacy of Christ's work. Let us concede that Butler's reasoning is irrefragable in proving that works of supererogation are impossible to any created being, it follows from this that atonement cannot be made by any created being, *if atonement be supererogation*—if it be the realizing of a surplusage of merit transferable to the credit of creatures, whose accounts exhibit a deficit instead of a surplus. If this be the essence of atonement, the principle on which works of supererogation and indulgences rest is a sound one, though applicable only to the work of Christ. No doubt it “*defeats the notion of satisfaction*,” to suppose Christ inferior to God, if we admit this notion of satisfaction to be true and accurate. But if the satisfaction of the Divine law depends on something different from the mere balancing of a debtor and creditor account, the whole of this elaborate and beautiful reasoning falls to the ground. Unless we know, fully and precisely, what the Divine law required for its

satisfaction, we cannot determine *a priori* whether one less than God could or could not have been "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world." We have far more certain knowledge of the Divinity of Christ from explicit statements of Scripture, than we have of the precise nature of the satisfaction demanded by the Divine government. To prove the former from the latter is to reverse the safe order of reasoning, and to argue from what is doubtful to what is certain—from that which is matter of dubious inference to that which Scripture reveals with a clearness proportioned to its vital importance.

NOTE 42, p. 152.

I have treated of two kinds of language, viz. *literal* and *figurative*. But besides these Mr. Veysie distinguishes a third kind, which he calls *analogical*—where the terms are "transferred from "one thing to another, not because the things are similar, but "because they are *in similar relations*." (Bampton Lectures for 1795, by D. Veysie, B.D., Lect. V. See also Magee's 31st note.)

This phraseology might be convenient if it were in common use; but I think that the name of *figurative* is usually applied to what Veysie calls *analogical*. The point of importance, however, in this whole controversy is not about the propriety of calling certain expressions *figures*, but about the meaning which they were intended to convey. Whether the name of one thing be applied to another, because these things are *similar in some of their attributes* (as when a man is called a *lion*), or because they are *in similar relations* (as when Christ is called the *head*, and his people *members*); in either case the meaning of the language is definite and precise, and not to be explained away under the pretence of its being figurative and rhetorical.

NOTE 43, p. 159.

Up to a certain point the idea of a martyrdom corresponds to that of a vicarious sacrifice; but it wants its most essential characteristics. Thus the sufferings endured by an innocent martyr *may* produce good effects upon others. The blood of martyrs has often been the seed of the Church. But in a vicarious sacrifice

there is the further idea, that the death of the sufferer was designed either by himself, or by those who immolated him, to effect this very good; and that this good was its natural and proper consequence. Thus the death of Codrus or Decius was *intended* to be a sacrifice. It certainly was more than a mere martyrdom. The idea contemplated by St. Paul, in Rom. v. 7, is evidently not a martyrdom, but a voluntary vicarious sacrifice. Any plausibility which may seem to belong to the system of interpretation, which makes Christ's death a mere martyrdom, arises from this, that it errs only by defect. Christ's death was a martyrdom; but it was a great deal more. It was a voluntary sacrifice like that of Decius; but it was far more even than that: for it was *really effectual* to produce results upon the human race, analogous to those lesser results which superstition led Codrus and Decius to hope for. In short, *theirs were real vicarious sacrifices in intention, but not in fact*; as any good results which flowed from their deaths must have been the result, not of any Divine appointment, but of that stimulus to the courage of their followers, and the fears of their enemies, which such spectacles of heroism, aided by superstition, were calculated to produce.

The three following points will show precisely the difference which I have endeavoured to point out: (1) The good effected by a mere martyrdom is only the occasional, not the constant and necessary result of it. (2) The good actually effected is not the object sought for either by the martyr or those who slay him. (3) These effects are merely such as the example of heroism, sympathy for innocent suffering, and indignation against violence and injustice may produce.

On the contrary, the effects of Christ's death (1) were not the accidental, but the necessary and proper consequences of it. (2) They were expressly designed by Him as the object to be attained by submitting to suffering. (3) They were of such a kind as not to be resolvable into example, sympathy, or any of the ordinary influences with whose working we are familiar, though they did not exclude these influences, but were, on the contrary, supplemented by them.

Mr. Jowett's statement that Christ "was put to death by sinful men, and raised men out of the state of sin, in this sense "taking their sins upon Himself" (Jowett, vol. i. p. 210), is

evidently meant to represent his death as a mere martyrdom, operating only by example and sympathy.

NOTE 44, p. 169.

"The world's being under the righteous government of God does indeed imply, that finally and upon the whole every one shall receive according to his personal deserts; and the general doctrine of the whole Scripture is, that this shall be the completion of the Divine government. But, during the progress, and, for aught we know, even in order to the completion of this moral scheme, vicarious punishments may be fit, and absolutely necessary." (Butler's Analogy, Part II. chap. v. § vii.)

NOTE 45, p. 178.

Mr. Litton is one of those who hold that men "*inherit guilt as well as corruption of nature, in consequence of the fall*" (Bampton Lectures, Appendix G, p. 354). It is satisfactory, therefore, to find, that, having truly stated that "*the sin of Adam and the righteousness of Christ*" are "*the sources respectively of death and life to the world*," he adds the acknowledgment that "*more than this the Apostle does not expressly assert in this passage*" (p. 353).

He says again, "Let it be granted that he does not explicitly affirm that the *guilt* of Adam's transgression is imputed to his posterity; let it be admitted that the Vulgate rendering of "*ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἡμάρτον*, *in quo omnes peccaverunt*, will not stand the test of criticism" (p. 353).

NOTE 46, p. 179.

I have avoided as much as possible using the word *imputation*, because it is used with great latitude to designate two widely different doctrines, one of which I hold, but not the other. The imputation of Christ's obedience, active and passive, I fully believe as it is explained in Article XI. That is, I believe that "we are *accounted righteous* before God only for the merit (*propter meritum*) of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith (*per fidem*), and not for our own works and deservings." But if, instead of this cautious and sober statement, it is meant by the doctrine of imputation that God has chosen of his own arbitrary will to attribute to every believer the merit of every act of Christ;

and, in a parallel way, to impute to every one born into the world the guilt of Adam's transgression: then I maintain that this is going beyond the statements of Scripture, and introducing *a theory to explain the facts* which are revealed, viz. that every child begins his life obnoxious to punishment, and yet that every one may receive the gift of acquittal and acceptance, prior to, and as a prerequisite to, the attainment of actual holiness.

That many of our most eminent divines have used the phrase *imputed righteousness* to mean no more than is expressed in Article XI., and that their doctrine is not at all opposed to what I have said in Lecture V., it would be easy to prove.

To give one instance: in O'Brien's (Bishop of Ossory's) *Sermons on Justification*, there is an elaborate and able note (Note 13, p. 349) on *imputed righteousness*. The object of this note is to show that justification implies not only remission of sin, but acceptance as righteous; and the Bishop lays down this as the general principle for which he contends, "*that the imputation of righteousness to the sinners whom God justifies, is as much a part of their justification as the remission of their sins.*"

The Bishop concludes his note by saying, "I think he may be taken to hold all that is strictly essential to the Scriptural doctrine of justification, who holds:—that we are justified by faith only; justified freely by God's grace, without works, when we believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly, and raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead; that in this justification our sins are blotted out, and we are counted righteous before God; and that of this free justification, of this pardon of our offences, and of the righteousness thus imputed to us, Christ's work in the flesh is the proper meritorious source. This, I think, comprehends what is strictly essential to the doctrine" (p. 360.)

I do not think that those who hold the doctrine of *imputation* as here stated, will find any thing to conflict with it in Lecture V.

NOTE 47, p. 183.

The evils of life have a twofold aspect, corresponding to the twofold nature we receive from Adam and Christ. As believers still retain the taint of corruption, so are they still sharers in suffering as part of the curse inherited from Adam; and, indeed, great part of their suffering is the consequence, and serves as the

chastisement of their remaining sinfulness. But that suffering which is *the consequence*, not of their sin, but of *their struggle against sin* (e.g. such suffering as arises from persecution for integrity or truth), must be regarded as "*the fellowship of Christ's sufferings*," as "*bearing in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus*;" all whose sufferings arose, not from sin within, but from the struggle with sin and the evil one who assailed Him from without, and attempted to crush Him, and did actually for a time extinguish his natural life. Believers suffer in both these forms, because they possess the old and new natures together; one of them only is "*the fellowship of Christ's sufferings*."

NOTE 48, p. 189.

δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ.

There is considerable diversity of opinion about the exact meaning of δικαιοσύνη in the several parts of this passage. The δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ in verse 21 must be regarded as something which God gives to man; it is, to use Augustine's words, "*justitia Dei, non quâ justus est, sed quâ induit hominem, cum justificat impium*." On the contrary, in verses 25 and 26 it seems more naturally to mean "*God's judicial righteousness*," his "*JUSTICE*" (Alford), *quâ justus est*, and not any thing communicated to man. I have followed Alford and Olshausen, and assumed this to be the meaning in my discussion of verse 26, though it has the appearance of giving two distinct meanings to one word in the same passage. This would be a fatal objection, if it were not that these apparently distinct meanings are essentially the same, and only assume a different aspect according to the context. In both cases the δικαιοσύνη is a something belonging to, and flowing from God; but where its effect on man is discussed, we think of it as something belonging to man, whereas in verses 25 and 26 it is spoken of as it is in itself, an attribute of God. The radical uniformity of meaning of the phrase throughout is preserved as nearly as possible in the E. V. by the translation "*righteousness*," though the connexion is much obscured by the cognate adjective and verb being unavoidably rendered by *just* and *justify*.

Some, however, have endeavoured to prevent the apparent change of meaning by translating δικαιοσύνη (verses 25 and 26)

as before, *sin-forgiving, righteousness, justification*; but this is certainly less suitable to the rest of these verses.

I need not enter further into the discussion of this question, as I have carefully avoided resting any of the conclusions in Lecture VI. on either interpretation. The leading idea of verse 26, and that which I have sought to elucidate, is completely enunciated in the words "just and a justifier;" the one expressing God's attribute of justice singly, the other his exercise of mercy in the pardon of sinners. Whether the substantive *δικαιοσύνη*, in the same verse, refers to the former only, or to the latter only, or, as it seems to me, embraces both under one higher view of justice (so that the words "just and justifier" are, as it were, both exegetical of *δικαιοσύνη*); in any case, the question emerges which I have discussed in Lecture VI., viz. How is the apparent opposition between a just administration of the law and a free pardon of sin to be removed?

NOTE 49, p. 190.

In asserting that the sacrifices and purifications were no less an integral part of the Mosaic law than the decalogue itself, I by no means intend to place them on the same level of obligation and importance.

The *precepts* of the moral law, though incorporated into the Mosaic code, had an authority superior to, and antecedent to the promulgation of that code. But the *sanctions* attached to the breach or fulfilment of these Divine precepts were not of the same high and permanent character as the precepts themselves, but must be reckoned among the temporal enactments of the law of Moses. In fact, the penalties stood on precisely the same level with the sacrifices and purifications prescribed for their prevention or removal. Consequently, the principle of atonement being once admitted, the belief in higher sanctions would naturally lead to the expectation of a proportionally higher sacrifice. And, in fact, these two were revealed together, while the principle of atonement remained unaltered.

NOTE 50, p. 195.

There is a difference between the principles assumed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in this passage. In the former the cleansing efficacy of sacrifice is assumed, and no attempt is made

to explain or account for it. In Romans iii. it is not its efficacy, but its justice, which is assumed. The Apostle takes for granted that God's providing a *ἱλαστήριον* is a proof of his justice.

NOTE 51, p. 198.

The passage which I have quoted from Archbishop Magee occurs in a disquisition on the phrase "*bearing sins*," which he explains to be "*the suffering, or being liable to suffer, some infliction on account of sin, which, in the case of the offender himself, would properly be called punishment.*" (Magee, Note 42, vol. i. p. 291.)

The particular case of vicarious suffering, which gives rise to these remarks, is that of children "bearing the sins of their fathers."

NOTE 52, p. 200.

"And yet, what has been often alleged in justification of this doctrine, even from the apparent natural tendency of this method of our redemption—its tendency to vindicate the authority of God's laws, and to deter his creatures from sin; this has never yet been answered, and is, I think, plainly unanswerable: *though I am far from thinking it an account of the whole of the case.*" (Butler's Analogy, Part II. chap. v. § vii.)

NOTE 53, p. 203.

If the reader wishes to see how the objection, grounded on the supposed injustice of the innocent suffering for the guilty, may be retorted with increased force upon the Socinian, he will find this and several other objections to the doctrine of atonement briefly and clearly handled in a clever little book, edited by the author of "The Eclipse of Faith," and entitled "The Correspondence of R. E. H. Greyson, Esq.," vol. i. p. 304.

The following statement of an objector's idea of the Atonement so closely resembles many passages in Maurice and other popular writers, and receives so exactly the answer which they ought to receive, that I cannot forbear from quoting it.

"And now for your fancy sketch. You say that according to the 'current' notions of Christians, 'God is represented in 'moody inexorable wrath, as *averse* to save man till, Moloch-like, 'He was unjustly propitiated by innocent blood; till Christ's

“ ‘sufferings wrung from Him a sullen and ungracious pardon.’
 “ Who can believe this, you ask? Who indeed? I cannot, for
 “ one; but then I know of no one else who does” (p. 296).

NOTE 54, p. 205.

The subject of the suitability of the Atonement to man's nature and wants, is not only important of itself—as furnishing strong internal evidence of the truth of the doctrine,—but it has an important bearing on the conclusions arrived at in a previous part of the Lecture. For it would be altogether unaccountable, that all religions, Jewish and Gentile alike, should have adopted the principle of sacrificial expiation; and that the Apostle should consequently have assumed the efficacy and justice of expiation as fundamental axioms; if sacrifice had no hold upon the human mind beyond that of mere traditional habit.

This point is well put in a book which I regret exceedingly that I did not meet with till nearly the whole of my Lectures were in type. It is entitled “The Philosophy of Evangelicism.” (London, Bell and Daldy, 1857.)

At p. 149, the author thus reasons on the universality of sacrifice. “There is in the rite of sacrifice something more than a fact transmitted. It surpasses belief, that various nations, with diversified institutions and habits of thought, should concur in the same practice and combine it with their religious worship, unless it were associated in their minds with some great religious sentiment. Then how did that sentiment originate? Was *it* intuitional or empirical? And if empirical, by what external medium was it conveyed, and what was the doctrine taught? The attempt has been made to attach to every acceptable ante-Christian sacrifice a distinct prophetic preconception of the sacrifice of Christ. Every sacrifice offered without this preconception is accordingly anathematized, as an act of irrational and sanguinary superstition: and, however difficult it may be to bring our minds to so sweeping and fearful a conclusion, there is no escape from this wholesale libel upon antiquity, otherwise than by associating with the typical offering an intuitive moral import.”

I would direct the student's attention, as regards this whole subject, (though less with reference to the Atonement than other

Christian doctrines,) to an admirable little book, "Essays on the Accordance of Christianity with the Nature of Man," by Edward Fry. (Edinburgh, Constable and Co., 1857.)

In the introduction, Mr. Fry thus states the general question which he proposes to discuss. "If Christianity be a message from God, it is also a message to man; and if it must become the character of Him who sent it, we are sure also that it must be fitted to the nature of him to whom it is sent. Now, though we be ignorant of God's nature and of the nature of things, yet we are not entirely ignorant of our own natures, but may, by means of consciousness and reflection on ourselves, gain no inconsiderable knowledge of them: so that here we have scope for an inquiry into the internal evidences of Christianity." (Fry's Essays, p. 8, 9.)

"The question which I have been endeavouring to inquire into in these essays is a very simple one, being but this: whether that religion which professes to be a message from God to man about his moral condition, does speak of it or assume it as in fact it is,—whether the remedies, which profess to come from a Divine physician, have any thing to do with our state of disease,—whether that which professes to be a restoration of our fallen nature does fit on to those old and almost buried foundations of the primeval edifice, which we may still find by excavating deep into our reflection and consciousness. But here my inquiry ends; and I have nothing to do with those other questions which may be raised as to whether the message is such as befits the sender as well as the recipient,—whether the medicine is such as we should expect from the physician as well as what suits the patient,—whether the means adopted for restoring our nature are such as we should expect from a Divine architect; and until I know much more of the Divine nature than I now do, I shall endeavour to avoid exercising my reason upon them." (Fry's Essays, p. 11, 12.)

NOTE 55, p. 210.

It is often extremely difficult to ascertain Maurice's meaning with certainty, and it is hardly possible to put any construction upon his words which may not be open to denial on his part. I

have attentively studied Sermon XV. of his Doctrine of Sacrifice, and, whatever be the meaning which he intended to convey, I have little doubt that most of his readers will understand him, as teaching them to regard the sense of guilt and fear of punishment which exist in every human heart, and the barrier which they raise between man and God, as a snare and delusion of the *diabolus* or *accuser*, who not only strives by his "whispers" "to set a man at war with his neighbours, but also to set him at war with himself" (p. 238). I know that the statements of that sermon might be otherwise explained. It might be said, that the censures contained in it are levelled, not against the legitimate exercise of conscience, and the sense of ill desert arising therefrom, but against that alienation from God, and distrust of Him, which such feelings, if exclusively attended to, are apt to engender. None will deny that their witness may be perverted, and become a very dangerous snare. Maurice says truly, "Conscience cannot be an enemy of reformation—cannot bid us continue in evil. It must be one who is perverting all the witnesses of conscience" (p. 239).

This is all very true; but does he give us any criterion to distinguish the use from the abuse—the legitimate fear of just punishment from the delusive dread of God? Does he not rather scout all fear of God or of punishment as delusive? On Maurice's system there is nothing to be atoned but man himself. All the conclusions, then, which men draw from the feeling of guilt, or rather those intuitive convictions which they arrive at without any reasoning,—the very feelings which make an atonement necessary, which make men satisfied with no religion which does not provide one,—all such feelings, I have little doubt, would be set down by him indiscriminately, not to the legitimate and truthful admonitions of conscience, but to the perverted suggestions of that evil one, who is represented as being to us, not only the "accuser of the brethren," but of ourselves.

On Maurice's system Christ's work of Atonement is not the means whereby man may cross the chasm which sin had opened between him and his Maker, but the assurance that no such chasm ever existed. In a system which thus practically denied the Atonement it was hard to assign a right place and meaning to those intuitive wants, to which Atonement has, by the common

consent of mankind, been regarded as the proper supply. But, as the existence of these feelings was a fact of which some account must be given, and as it would have been fatal to the writer's theory to give them a place among the true responses of our spiritual nature, it is dexterously hinted, if not expressly asserted, that they belong not to the witness of a heaven-taught conscience, but to the whispers of the enemy and accuser of mankind.

NOTE 56, p. 214.

It is necessary to observe that two very different objects are contemplated by different writers, who profess to show how God's justice and mercy are *reconciled* in the Atonement. Some, no doubt, profess nothing less than to show the whole of the plan of redemption as it proceeded from the Divine mind. Against such folly and presumption it will be scarcely necessary to warn any one who has cared to follow the writer in the humbler line of investigation marked out in these Lectures. Generally, however, when the Atonement is spoken of as *reconciling* God's justice and love, it is meant only that it *includes the exercise of both these attributes*. This is plainly the sense in which these words are used by Mr. Thompson (see his Bampton Lectures, *e. g.* p. 127, and preceding pages). The word *reconcile* is not happily chosen to express this.

THE END.

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